

2nd of Slate, Year 313
241st Year of Archcrystal
The Invasion

Unib was about to die and she knew it. The dwarf steadied her steel pick and raised it high over her head and brought it crashing down on the bright blue adamantine floor below the magma sea. She heard screams and then nothing at all.

When the breach was made deep underground, hell was open to the caverns and the demons of the underworld raced upwards into the mortal realm – only this time it was on purpose. The Mad Queen Libash wanted her see-through fortress to be amongst the swirling horrors of the underworld. The military was ready. The Giant War Tigers would be used as bait along with an artifact statue. An Artifact door would hold the initial attack to the killing floor.

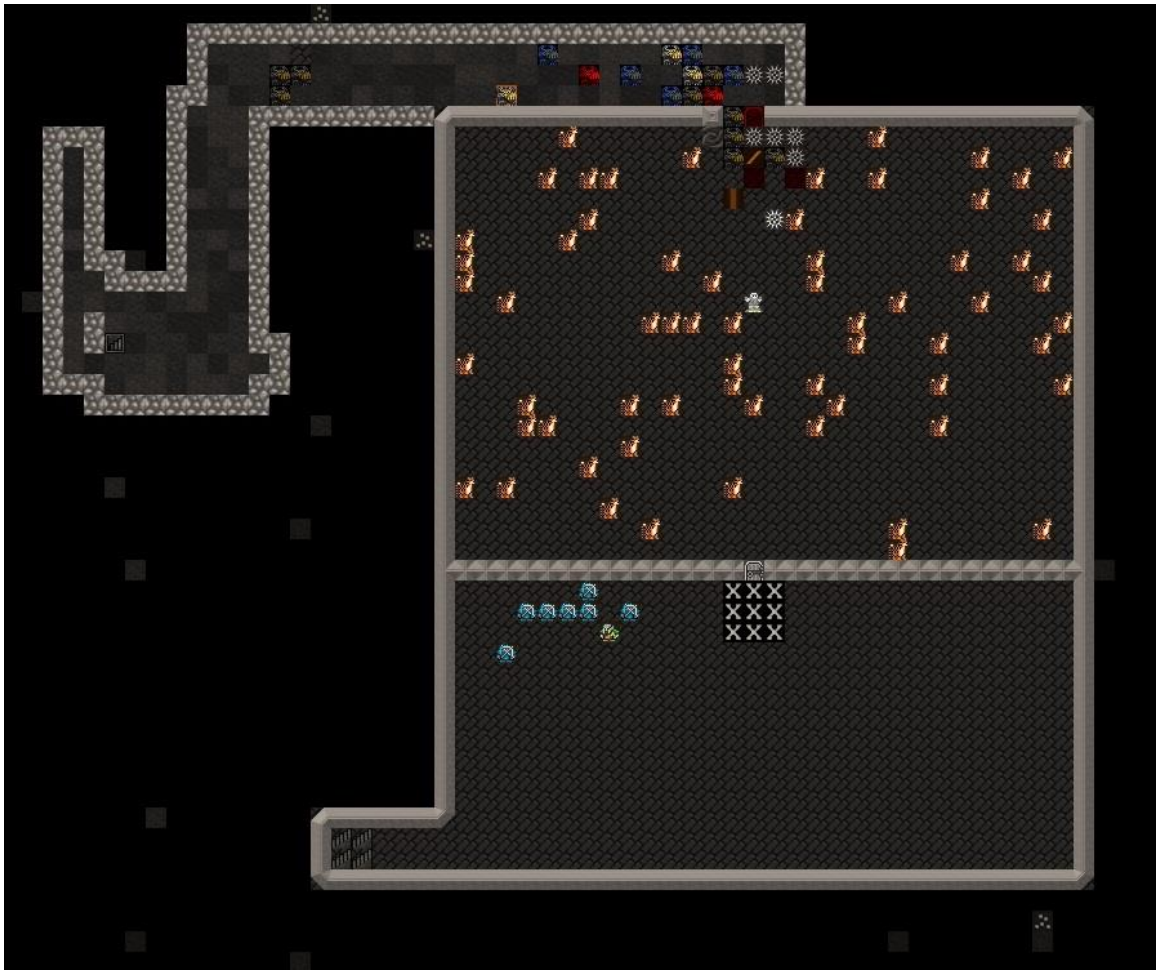
Citizens (48)		Pets/Livestock (180)		Others (128)	Dead/Missing (29)
Horned Banshee					Underworld
Horned Banshee					Underworld
Horned Banshee					Underworld
Horned Banshee					Underworld
Horned Banshee					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Burning Brute					Underworld
Pterosaur Brute					Underworld
Pterosaur Brute					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Demon Of Water					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Gray Haunt					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Winged Fiend					Underworld
Salt Phantom					Underworld
Salt Phantom					Underworld
Salt Phantom					Underworld
Salt Phantom					Underworld
Haunt Of Snow					Underworld
Haunt Of Snow					Underworld

Citizens (48)	Pets/Livestock (180)	Others (128)	Dead/Missing (2916)
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Demon Of Water			Underworld
Demon Of Water			Underworld
Demon Of Water			Underworld
Gray Monster			Underworld
Demon Of Water			Underworld
Demon Of Water			Underworld
Burning Brute			Underworld
Burning Brute			Underworld
Burning Brute			Underworld
Burning Brute			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Winged Fiend			Underworld
Winged Fiend			Underworld
Winged Fiend			Underworld
Winged Fiend			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Horned Banshee			Underworld
Horned Banshee			Underworld
Horned Banshee			Underworld
Horned Banshee			Underworld
Horned Banshee			Underworld
Horned Banshee			Underworld
Gray Monster			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Salt Phantom			Underworld
Gray Monster			Underworld
Gray Monster			Underworld
Gray Monster			Underworld
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Haunt Of Snow			Underworld
Hagma Crab			Wild Animal
Hagma Crab			Wild Animal
Giant Rat			Wild Animal
Giant Rat			Wild Animal
Giant Rat			Wild Animal
Crundle			Wild Animal

Snarling and deafening the spire with high pitched screams the horde of demons raced towards the first large room of the dwarven fortress.



At last they broke through the cinnabar doors into the snarl of the Giant Tigers. Immediately the Marksdwaves opened fire.



The first few demons fell instantly the legendary aim of the elite marksdwarves, but more poured through the opening slaughtering the Giant War Tigers as they went. Bolt after bolt raced towards their monstrous targets as a seemingly endless stream of giant devils crashed into the room throwing acid, spewing flames, and spitting poison.



Behind the back staircase the melee dwarves waited patiently alongside their cave dragon pets. They were gigantic monsters that were once dragons now adapted to and polluted by the underground. The dwarves had bred these cave dragons over 2 centuries for this moment. They could wait a little longer. Besides they would be needed later.



The battle lasted several hours with the demons clawing futilely at the artifact door as their bodies were shredded by the unmerciful projectiles. The last of them were crawling and limping on the floor still in their pursuit of a mortal feast until, finally, the horde was dead, having been relentlessly shot by the Marksdwarves while occupied with the Giant Tigers. One tiger even survived.

Down the Adamantine spire went the military. Only 20 dwarves but backed by over 50 Cave Dragons they hold the spire against the remaining demons down below while the others work quickly to construct the stairs of glass.



Now as they get ready to invade hell they'll soon find out that the demons have made a trap of their own...

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PS: 100 (25) Doren Hengedtul #Doren Lashedgrooved# sheriff
#Always tell the truth#
Within the last season he didn't feel anything after seeing a giant tiger die.
He is the son of Thikut Hobbedrooms and Melbil Trattedrelic. He is a worshipper of Kadel, a worshipper of Kadel
and an ardent worshipper of Akan.
He is a citizen of The Dipped Spears. He is a member of The Crazy Coal. He is the militia captain of The Crazy
Coal. He is the sheriff of The Crazy Coal.
He is one hundred one years old, born on the 4th of Malachite in the year 212.
He is scrappy. His very long sideburns are braided. His long moustache is arranged in double braids. His very
long beard is arranged in double braids. His long hair is neatly combed. His pink skin is wrinkled. His head is
somewhat short. His emerald eyes are somewhat narrow. His nose bridge is somewhat concave. His ears somewhat narrow.
His hair is copper mixed with gray.
He is basically unbreakable, absolutely inexhaustible and extremely agile, but he is weak and really
vulnerable to disease.
Doren Hengedtul likes bituminous coal, billion, onyx, the color goldenrod, gems, bracelets and drums. When
possible, he prefers to consume maize beer. He absolutely detests fire snakes.
He has a stunning feel for spatial relationships, unbreakable focus, an astounding feel for the position of his
own body, great intuition, a very good sense of empathy and a lot of willpower, but he has a little difficulty with
word. He is a bit of a mess.
Like others in his culture, he holds craftsmanship to be of the highest ideals and celebrates talented
artisans and their masterworks. He has a great deal of respect for the law, values family greatly, believes that
honesty is a high ideal, greatly respects artists and their works, really respects those that take the time to
master a skill, deeply respects those that work hard at their labors, respects fair-dealing and fair-play, values
cooperation, finds merrymaking and buying worthwhile activities, values martial prowess, values leisure time,
respects commerce and finds nature somewhat disturbing. He personally thinks friendship is important, values cunning
and doesn't particularly value loyalty. He dreams of mastering a skill, and this dream was realized.
He is not the type to fall in love or even develop positive feelings. He is sloppy with his living space. He
presents himself modestly and frowns on any flashy accoutrements. He is very slow to anger. He could be considered
rude. He is rarely happy or enthusiastic and he is conflicted by this, as he values parties and merrymaking in the
abstract. He is somewhat uncomfortable around those that appear unusual or live differently from himself. He tends
to be a little wasteful when working on projects. He can handle stress. He is very humble. He needs alcohol to get
through the working day. He does not mind being outdoors, at least for a time. He is a hardened individual.
A short, sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.
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Doren Lashedgrooved, the longtime sheriff of Archcrystal, stood impatiently with his arms crossed at the bottom of the adamantine column waiting for the staircase down into hell to be completed. Moments before the Militia Commander, Thikut, provoked one of the winged ash spiders flying past below. Thikut was webbed and killed in an instant, and his nephew charged at the beast sharing the fate of the deceased Militia Commander before it was shot to death by a dozen steel bolts. That left 8 meatshields, calculated Doren, but no matter. The Cave Dragons would provide most of the cover for the sheriff's squad of Elite Marksdwarves. Thikut was very old and wanted a warrior's death. He got it.

Doren and his Marksdwarves of The Armored Roads were different from the reckless Axe and sword swinging berserkers of The Mountainous Castles. Doren's squad was calm and methodical, made in his own image, efficient, cunning, and a touch cruel. They were the ones needed for this kind of work. And it now fell to Doren to lead the attack, but he would have anyway.

At last the stairs were finished just enough. The melee dwarves of the Mountainous castles raced down with a deafening warcry followed by their gigantic Cave Dragon

companions. Meanwhile Doren waited with his crossbow squad calmly until the way was clear and then led them single file down the clear glass steps. His adamantine boots hit the alien stone ground with a muffled crash that kicked up a layer of ash into the air. The Cave Dragons had found a Demon unfortunately made of snow and were playfully tearing it to pieces, cheered on by the Axedwarves. Doren calmly walked forward, unfolded a portable chair and table several paces behind the crowd and sat down.

Doren took out a pen and paper and began writing margins and numbers, calculating and quantifying what had been killed, descriptions of the various demons and their capabilities. Meanwhile more cave dragons sprinted past his chair to join the others. He didn't concern himself with the small skirmishes taking place, and remained documenting his work while his squad held its position and occasionally fired a few bolts here and there. Even the Mad Queen was striking at a stray Water Demon a number of yards away, cackling wildly with every thrust and parry.

Suddenly, Doren's pen stopped its consistent scribbling. Something was wrong. He could sense something shift on the horizon – a hidden vibration, a low rumble. He readied his crossbow and told his squad to do the same. Quickly, over the horizon a new horder crested the ridge, at least 30 in number. They had been waiting until dwarves touched their ground to launch a second attack. Perhaps the demons weren't so easily tricked. Fine, thought Doren. We shot them on our terms. He loaded his crossbow. Time to shoot them on theirs.

The fury of the demons crashed like an ocean wave against a cliffside of dragons and dwarves. Bolts sang through the air finding plenty of homes. Great billows of smoke rose from the searing crash of fireballs from the Burning Brutes against the cave dragons impervious scales.



Doren once again could not help but remark how tough the cave dragons were. They took an astonishing amount of punishment from the demon onslaught before going down. It left time for the bolts or the odd spear or axe to find its target.

The Mad Queen Libash still laughed hysterically and waded through the chaos, swinging her axe with insane glee.

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The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen is caught in a burst of boiling dwarven wine!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
Libash Mamotzulban queen: I have a part in this. There is no need to
feel vengeful.
The queen hacks The Haunt Of Snow in the left lower arm with her
Amugogtum breaking away half of the tissue!
The Haunt Of Snow charges at The queen!
The queen jumps away!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen hacks The Haunt Of Snow in the left lower arm with her
Amugogtum and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow strikes at The queen but the shot is blocked!
Libash Mamotzulban queen: I have a part in this. There is no need to
feel vengeful.
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen kicks The Haunt Of Snow in the right upper arm with her right
foot and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen hacks The Haunt Of Snow in the right upper arm with her
Amugogtum breaking away half of the tissue!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
Libash Mamotzulban queen: I cannot just stand by. There is no need
to feel vengeful.
The Haunt Of Snow leaps at The queen!
The queen jumps away!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen punches The Haunt Of Snow in the right lower leg with her left
hand and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen hacks The Haunt Of Snow in the lower body with her Amugogtum
breaking away half of the tissue!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
Libash Mamotzulban queen: I cannot just stand by. There is no need
to feel vengeful.
The queen hacks The Haunt Of Snow in the lower body with her Amugogtum
and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow leaps at The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow collides with The queen!
The queen is knocked over and tumbles backward!
The queen stands up.
The queen scratches The Haunt Of Snow in the left upper arm and the
severed part sails off in an arc!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
The queen hacks The Haunt Of Snow in the right lower leg with her
Amugogtum breaking away a piece of the tissue!
The Haunt Of Snow misses The queen!
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Finally she bled to death from burns. They say, you can still hear her haunting voice echo off the pits of hell trying to convince herself not to feel vengeful, each time getting softer until it is lost on the brimstone wind.



One last Horned Banshee writhed on the ground trapped by the clenching jaws of the cave dragons. The sheriff slowly walked to the struggling demon and whispered, “Filth.” And he gave it a final kick to its head that collapsed its skull.

“This is our home now.”

Doren looked up to where they had come down and already the glassmakers began to do what dwarves did best.

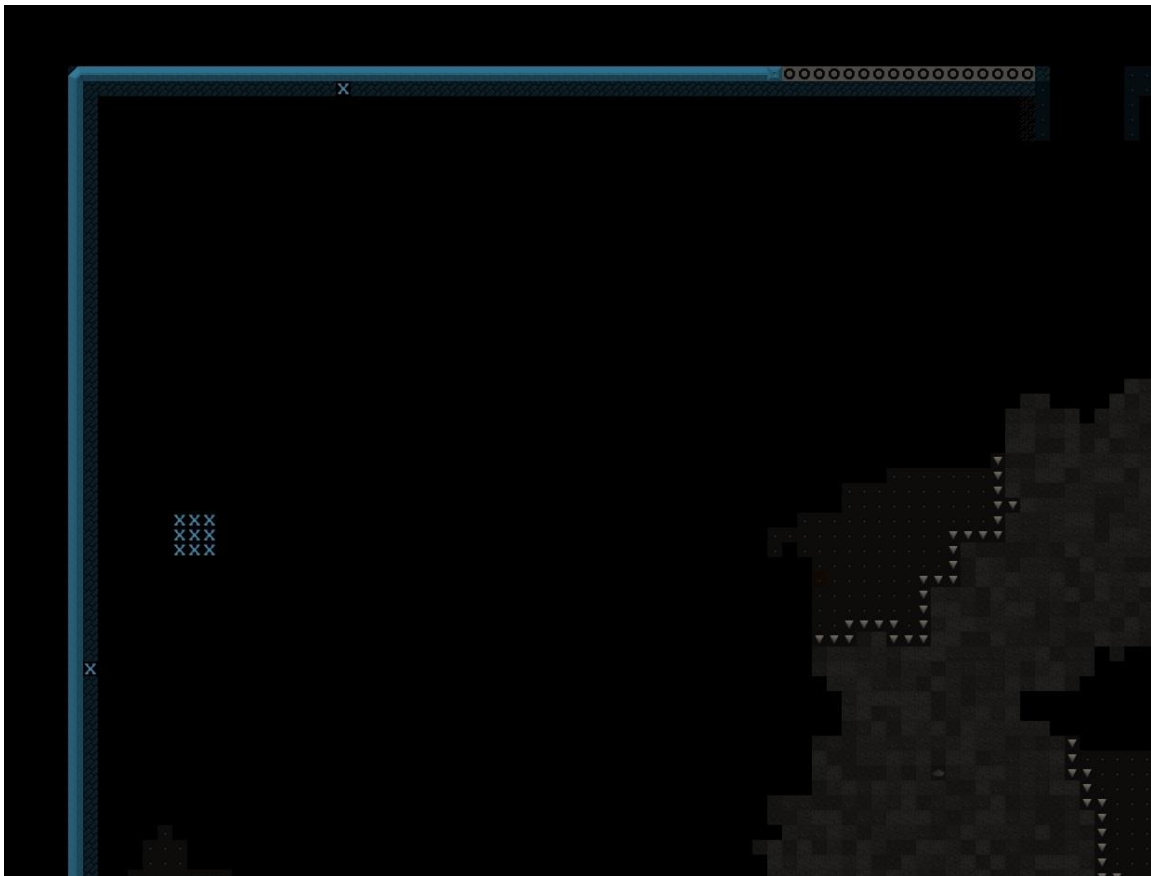


4th of Sandstone Year 314
242nd Year of Archcrystal
Moldath and Iton

It had been over a year and a half since Doren the sheriff had last laid eyes on a demon, and it had disturbed him increasingly. He didn't like not knowing things, and he didn't like peace through ignorance. The glass walls continued to go up.



They had to be very high to reach the semi-molten rock ceiling.



But if he was honest with himself, he would feel safer if there was something attacking them. At last, he had enough, and sent for Moldath and Iton.



Moldath and Iton were the last surviving members of the Mountainous Castles. The new Militia Commander who led them, was just 12 years old, so they were training her more

than she was training them. While Moldath and Iton weren't terribly smart, they both had an awful memory, they were incredibly lucky and seemed to elude disaster well.

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FPS: 100 (25) Moldath Fikodastel #Moldath Glazedaily# Swordmaster

#Why are they so fixated on these baubles?#

Within the last season she felt pleasure after a sparring session. She was blissful after sleeping in a great bedroom. She didn't feel anything after seeing the forgotten beast Thomo die. She didn't feel anything after seeing a giant tiger die. She is the daughter of Tosid Honorrooms and Cotten Doorpaged. She is a worshipper of Onol Diamondbeak, a dubious worshipper of Kadai and a casual worshipper of The Sugary Tricks. She is a citizen of The Dipped Spears. She is a member of The Crazy Coal. She is fifty-four years old, born on the 1st of Halachite in the year 260. She is strapped with massive amounts of muscle and lard. Her eyes are emerald. Her somewhat narrow flattened ears are very short. Her nose bridge is slightly convex. Her head is somewhat broad. Her hair is copper. Her medium-length hair is neatly combed. Her skin is pink. Her nose is somewhat short. She is unbelievably strong, basically unbreakable, almost never tired, agile and very agile. Moldath Fikodastel likes granite, iron, red purple, wagon wood, the color pale blue, slabs, bracelets, chickens for their clucking and merpeople for their tails. When possible, she prefers to consume draltha, finger millet beer, pearl millet and coconuts. She absolutely detests snails. She has an astounding feel for the position of her own body, a stunning feel for spatial relationships. She has an unbreakable focus on iron will and great intuition, a natural ability with music and a good intellect. But she has an iron will, a great intuition and a good intellect. Like others in her culture, she holds craftsmanship to be of the highest ideals and celebrates talented artisans and their masterworks. She has a great deal of respect for the law, greatly prizes loyalty, values family greatly, sees friendship as one of the finer things in life, believes that honesty is a high ideal, greatly respects artists and their works, really respects those that take the time to master a skill, deeply respects those that work hard at their labors, respects fair-dealing and fair-play, values cooperation, finds merrymaking and partying worthwhile activities, values martial prowess, values leisure time and respects commerce. She personally values nature. She dreams of mastering a skill and this dream was realized. She is incredibly brave in the face of looming danger, perhaps a bit foolhardy. She often feels envious of others. She is rarely happy or enthusiastic and she is conflicted by this as she values parties and merrymaking in the abstract. She has an active sense of humor. She does not easily fall in love and rarely develops positive sentiments. She has an active imagination. She tends to be passive in discussions. She is a friendly individual. She doesn't handle stress well. She doesn't focus on material goods. She tends to avoid crowds. She doesn't often experience strong cravings or urges. She is often nervous. She tries to do things correctly each time. She does not go out of her way to help others. She tends to make a small mess with her own possessions. She scratches her ear when she's thinking. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.

A short, sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.

FPS: 100 (25) Iton Letasunuk #Iton Cabainberse# Swordmaster

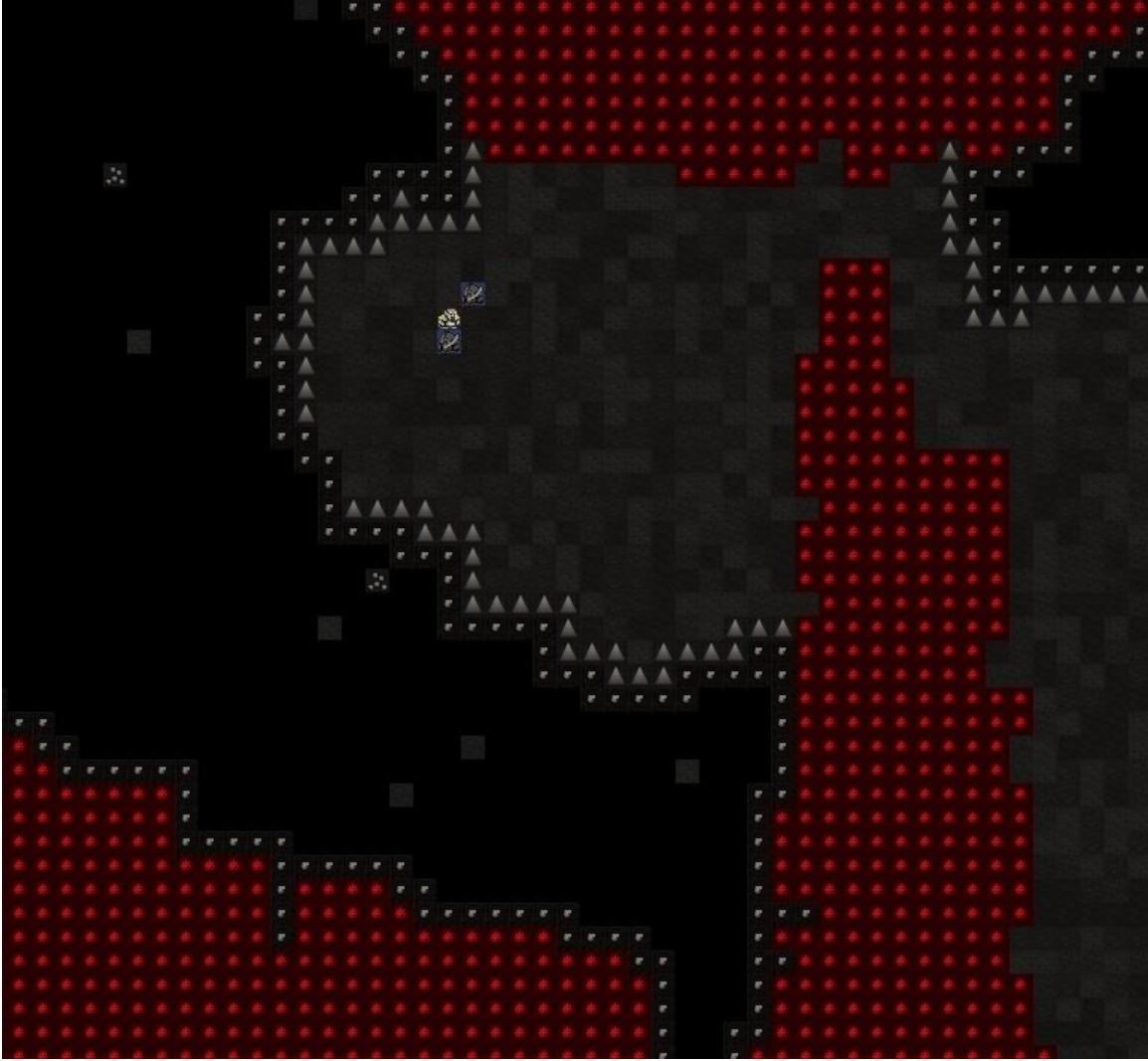
#I had a sparring session. I'm very pleased.#

She feels pleasure after a sparring session. Within the last season, she didn't feel anything after seeing the forgotten beast Thomo die. She was blissful after sleeping in a great bedroom. She didn't feel anything after seeing a giant tiger die. She is the daughter of Eden Glovedboulder and Fath Helmanars. She is an ardent worshipper of The Sugary Tricks, a dubious worshipper of Megab, a worshipper of The Sensual Hovis, a worshipper of Kadai and an ardent worshipper of Onol Diamondbeak. She is a citizen of The Dipped Spears. She is a member of The Crazy Coal. She is forty-six years old, born on the 7th of State in the year 260. She is strapped with massive amounts of muscle and lard. Her emerald eyes are slightly protruding. Her extremely narrow ears are fuse-lobed. She has a broad chin. Her somewhat narrow nose is upturned. Her eyebrows are extremely sparse. Her hair is copper. Her medium-length hair is neatly combed. Her skin is pink. She is unbelievably strong, basically unbreakable, very agile and slow to tire. But she is slow to heal. Iton Letasunuk like shale, copper, plume, agate, spacca wood, cloo, boots, turkeys, for their wattle and merpeople for their tails. When possible, she prefers to consume rabbit and banana beer. She absolutely detests worms. She has unbreakable focus, a stunning feel for spatial relationships, an astounding feel for the position of her own body, great intuition, a good intellect, a sum of patience and willpower. But she has a really bad memory. Like others in her culture, she holds craftsmanship to be of the highest ideals and celebrates talented artisans and their masterworks. She has a great deal of respect for the law, greatly prizes loyalty, values family greatly, sees friendship as one of the finer things in life, believes that honesty is a high ideal, greatly respects artists and their works, really respects those that take the time to master a skill, deeply respects those that work hard at their labors, respects fair-dealing and fair-play, values cooperation, finds merrymaking and partying worthwhile activities, values martial prowess, values leisure time and finds nature somewhat disturbing. She personally respects the law and doesn't particularly respect commerce. She dreams of creating a great work of art and this dream was realized. She lives at a slow-going and leisurely pace. She greatly moved by art and natural beauty and she is troubled by this since she dislikes the natural world. She could be considered rude. She tends to be passive in discussions. She is often nervous. She does not go out of her way to help others. She doesn't try to get things done perfectly. She is somewhat uncomfortable around those that appear unusual or live differently from herself. She does not often feel lustful. She is brave in the face of danger. She tends to avoid crowds. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

A short, sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.
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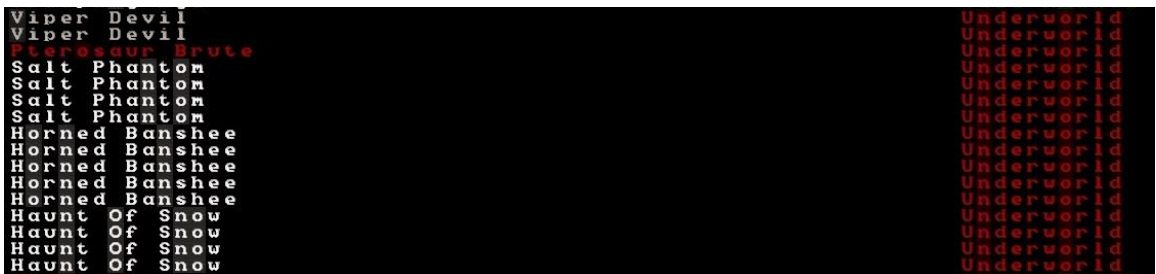
Doren couldn't quantify a talent like that, but he couldn't ignore it either. He sent them out to have a look around Hell. Etur, the 12 year old militia commander insisted that she come along, so off they went with their tiny officer. Because they were only 8 years apart Moldath and Iton had acted like sisters to each other even though Moldath was Iton's Great Aunt, it was fairly common place in Archcrystal, a place where everyone was related from the intermarrying between cousins for centuries. Every dwarf in Archcrystal could trace their lineage back to Bomrek and Cerol.

They moved quietly away from the Cave Dragons and moved to the south, the 12 year old Etur wide-eyed and gawking at the Eerie glowing pits of Hell. They carefully climbed the far southern ridge and when it seemed clear went down the other side. A large glowing pit lay further south, and they stopped to look and listen. All was quiet. Moldath and Iton looked at each other sharing their thoughts through long recognized facial expressions. They were puzzled.



They looked at Etur, her armor and helmet far too big for her small frame. Moldath smiled, but Iton frowned. “What’s wrong?” Moldath whispered.

Iton quietly pointed at Etur’s shoulder where a pile of dust was slowly starting to gather. They followed the tiny dirt waterfall upwards. Straight above was one of the other 3 adamantine spires. This one though, was hollow almost all the way to the top. Their underground vision served them well here as they could see up almost twenty stories into the shaft. There, they saw movement – a wing flutter, an eye glint. “They’re up there,” Iton whispered.



“Yeah, well your generation’s out of touch.”

“Well, your generation’s spoiled.”

Just then a small pebble hit the stone ground, and a larger rock almost landed on Etur. They all crouched silently and looked up for danger. After a few minutes Iton said, “Let’s get out here.”

“Good idea, what do we tell Doren?”

“I don’t know, just what we saw I guess. Let him figure it out.”

So they left to tell the sheriff with the militia commander skipping behind them.

Doren the sheriff sat in the king’s chambers and breathed in sharply before speaking.

“The channel is dug, sire, though I fail to see why we had to tap another underground lake. You intend see your sister’s plan through, I understand.”

“Yes, I do.” The king replied.

“A clear glass fort in hell. It’s ambitious.” Doren’s eyes flashed.

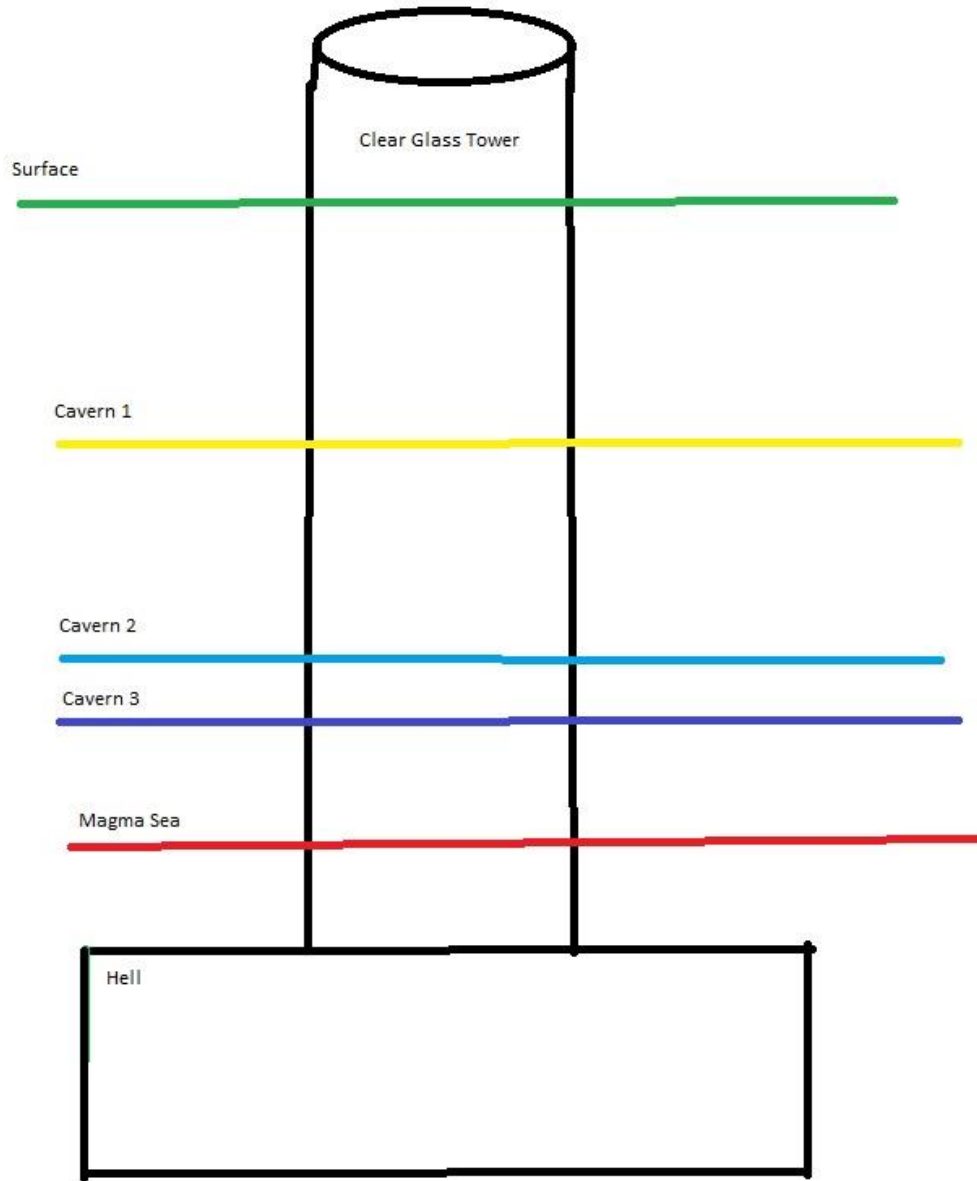
“Indeed, but I have much larger plans than my dear departed sister.”

“Is that why we are dumping water on the magma sea?”

“Yes... we are going to turn much of it to stone – and then dig down through it. At the same time we will dig up through the semi molten rock from hell.” The king smiled.

“You want to connect hell with the 3rd cavern?”

“Yes and much, much more.” The king rolled a large parchment onto the table. “Behold”



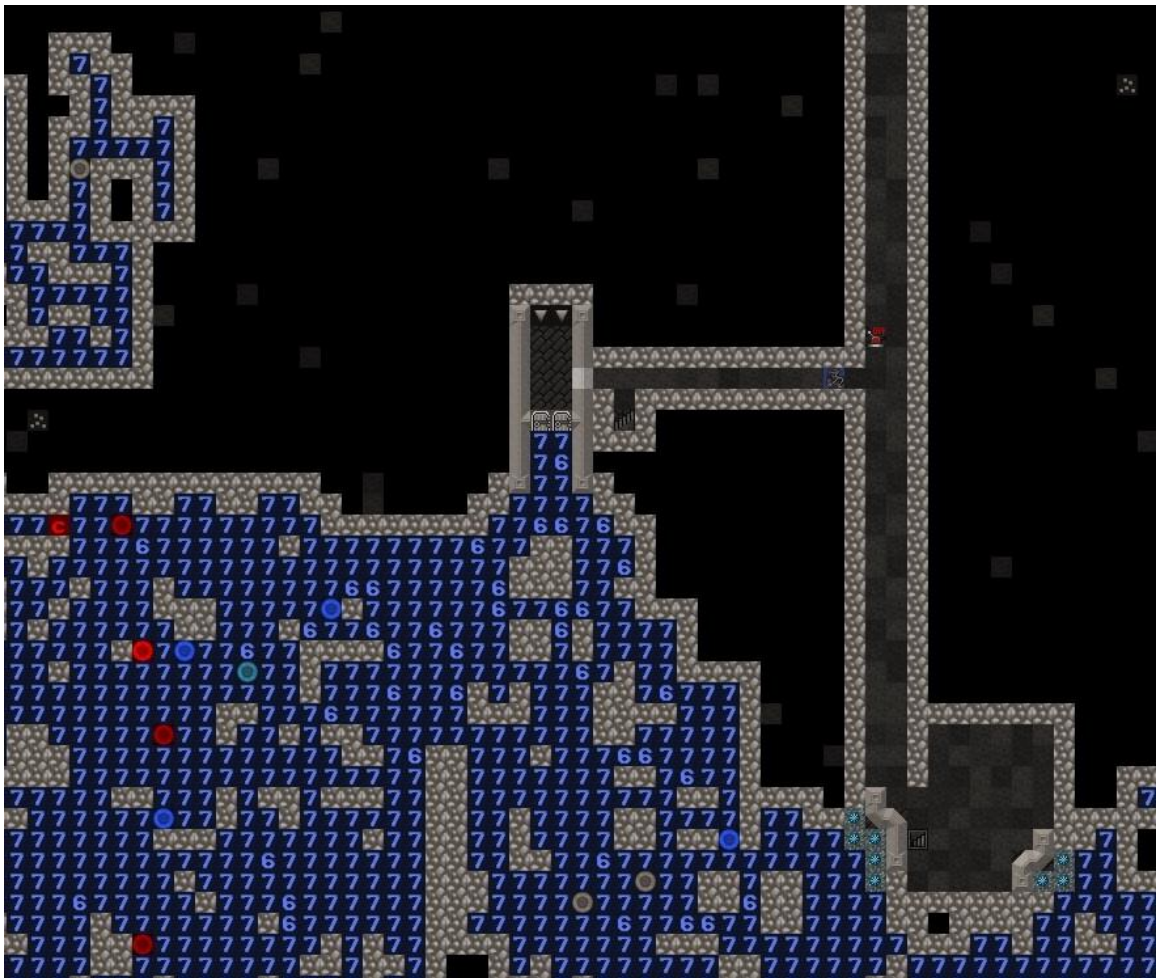
“We will connect hell with the surface. We will dig a large hole all the way down and raise a clear glass spire from the underworld through to the top of the jungle so that the sun will shine into hell through our glorious glass tower.”

Doren was speechless. It was rumoured that the demons raise towers of slade from hell to the their dark fortresses on the surface, but could the dwarves do the same with glass?

“Such a plan would take decades.”

“Good.” Said the king.

Doren the sheriff nodded and left. He had his orders and he liked the challenge. He gave the order and the dwarves started pouring water into the magma sea so they could start digging...

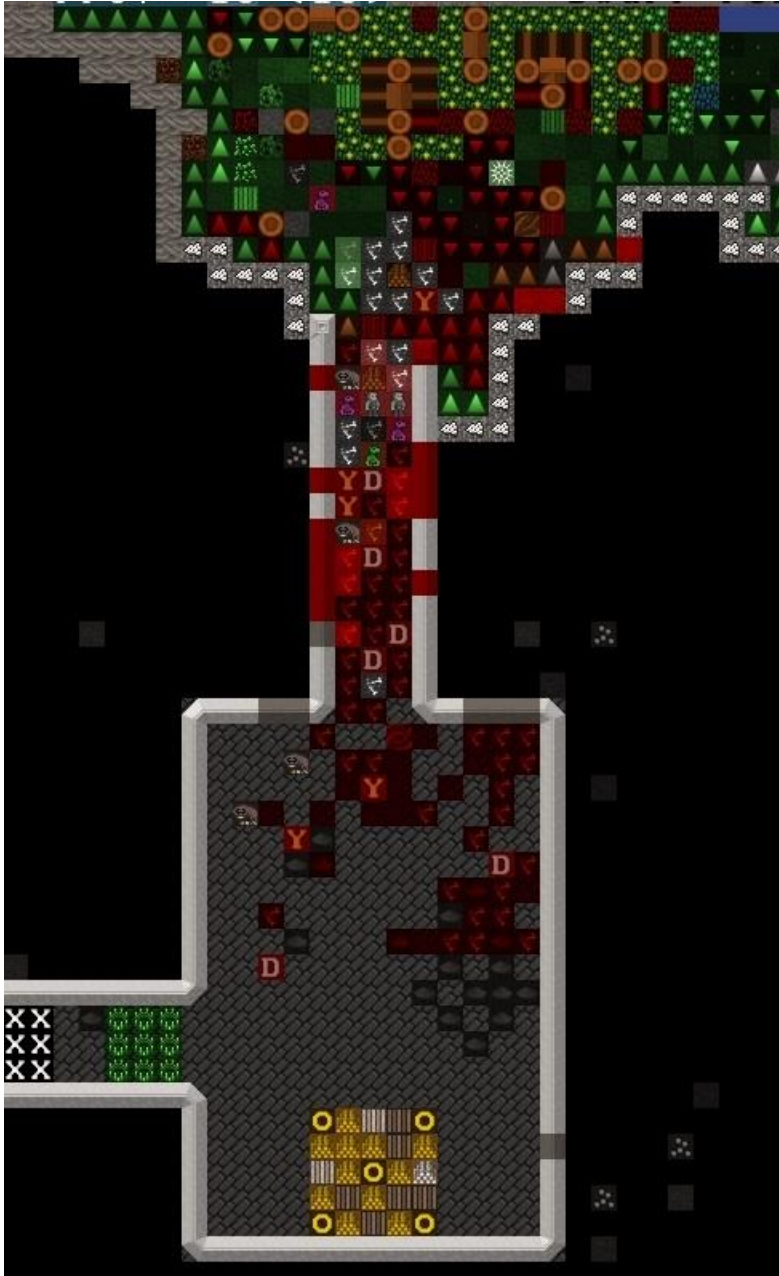






10th of Limestone Year 318
246th Year of Archcrystal
Pure Bloodlines

Doren the sheriff stepped outside the front gates into the haunted jungle and took in a deep breath. Unlike other dwarves he didn't mind being outdoors, at least for a time. The first task he had was to inspect the recently cleaned entrance. A few months ago, a human caravan tried to leave while a thick cloud of wicked soot swiftly rolled past the entrance. The results were disastrous.



The zombie husks quickly turned on each other and the few Cave Dragons at the entrance became infected in the fighting. They turned into monstrous killing machines, tearing apart the remaining merchants and animals before being engaged by the militia. The resulting fight was brutal. Edem sustained a few injuries, and lost her nose.

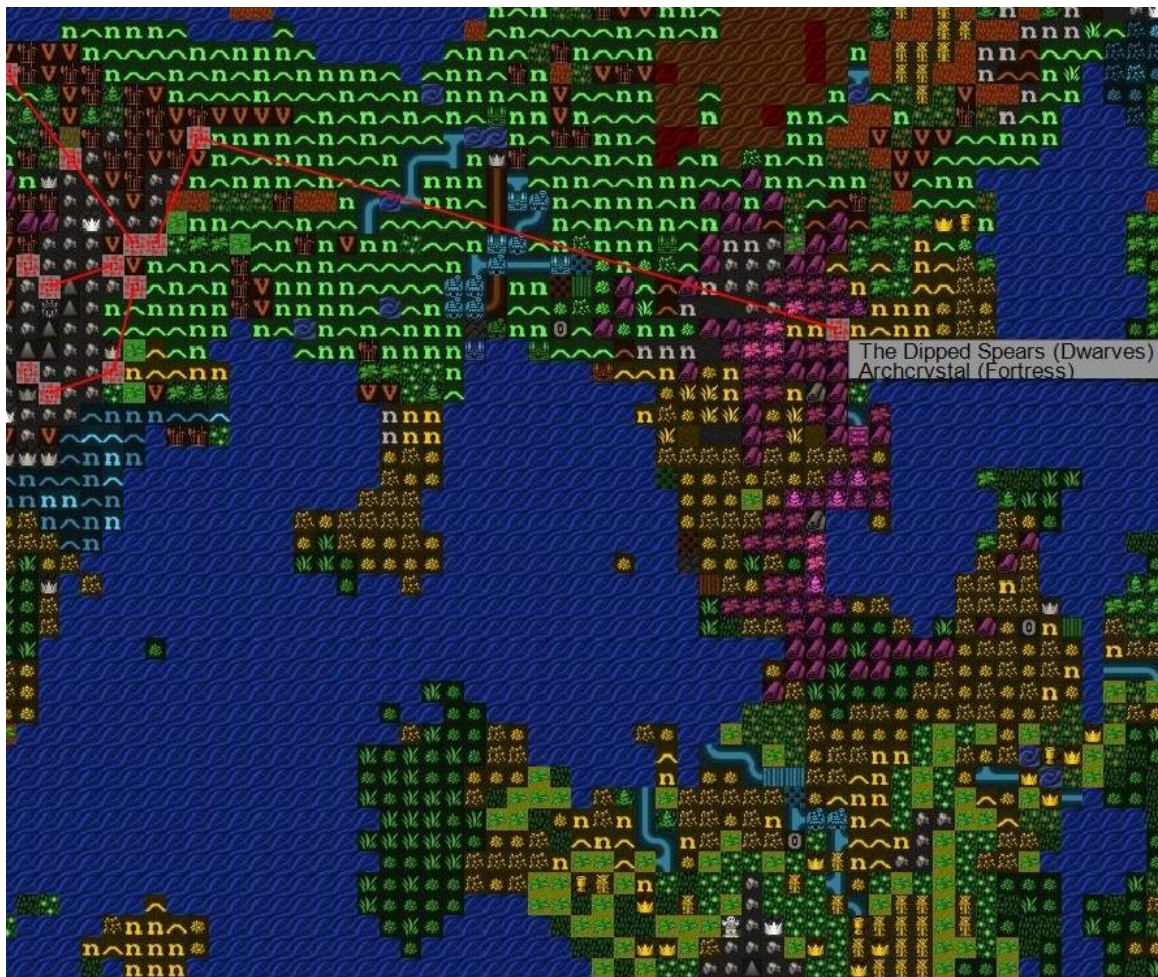
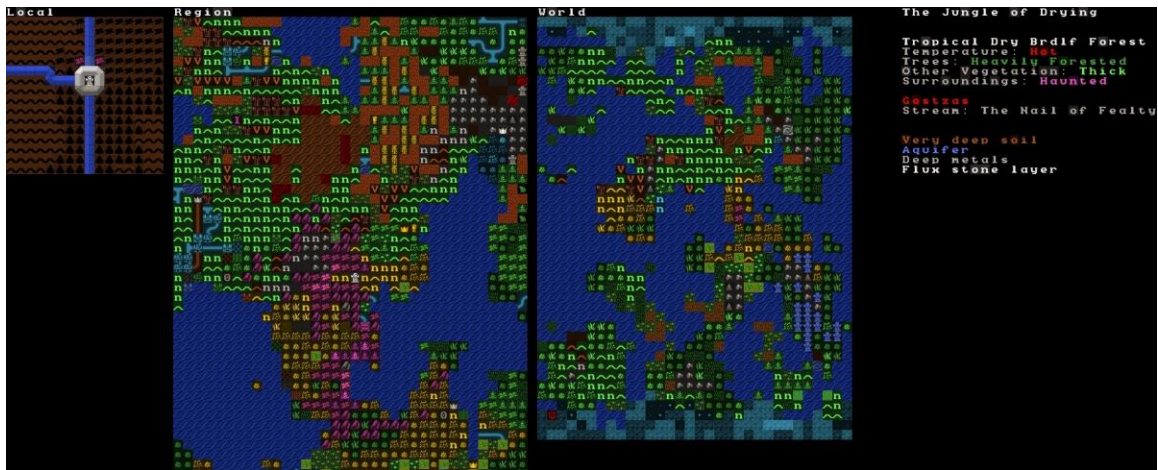


Fortunately, she wasn't infected and was able to continue with her duties, not the least of which was birthing more children. But still it was a terrible loss of six cave dragons that were nearing 250 years old, and were born close to the founding of Archcrystal.

The clean up had taken months, and only just now was the entrance appearing normal again. Doren ran a gloved finger across the floor before inspecting it close to his face. Finally, nodding to himself, he walked over to a spot in the grass just outside and unfolded his portable chair and table underneath a guava tree. He gathered his parchments and signaled to his guard that he was ready. Several of them moved north into the jungle.

It was migrant day at Archcrystal. Every year refugees, fleeing goblin groups such as the Exalted Fly or The Feral Doom, would brave the treacherous journey through the haunted Jungle of Drying as they attempted to reach Archcrystal to find a safe home. And every year it was Doren's job to turn them away. The royal family wanted to keep Archcrystal's bloodline pure. They had become steeped in tradition, idolizing the fort's great ancestors Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales and Cerol Treatyrim the Dark Zeal. They now believed that anyone not descended from Archcrystal's founders were not worthy of entrance, and developed a strict no immigrant policy. After 246 years, it was almost a religion now. But it was not something they revealed to the world. Instead, the sheriff would "screen" the refugees attempting entrance and find something – anything wrong with them. Too short, too fat, too tall, too skinny, hair not copper enough, eyes not emerald enough, too young, too old, too suspicious, too poor, too desperate, too many tears on their faces.

Doren the sheriff did his job with ruthless efficiency. It's not to say he agreed with the policy, his analytical mind could see problems arising with a focus so narrow. But Doren committed to his tasks – it was just the kind of dwarf he was. So the guard would advance a short ways to the north to where a refugee camp had formed next to the river and bring forth the poor souls to be "screened". One by one they were all turned away sobbing into the jungle. Archcrystal was in the center of the haunted jungle, far away from the rest of the settlements of the Dipped Spears.



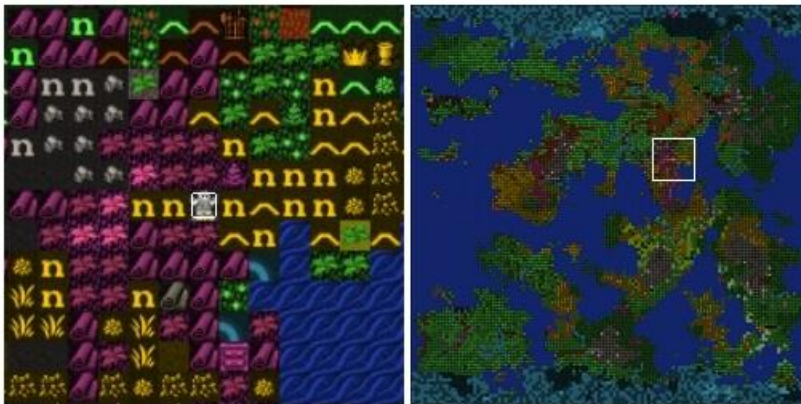
Of course, they probably wouldn't last long out there, especially so close to the goblin settlements of the Feral Doom.




The Feral Doom had expanded rapidly in the last 246 years from their Fortress of Hatejoined. They began with 6 settlements and had ballooned unchecked to 50 as they pushed west into the humans and south into the elves. The fear was among the other nations was that they would connect forces with their brethren, the Exalted Fly in the west.



The Exalted Fly had expanded even more rapidly, destroying fortress after fortress of The Dipped Spears, causing a flood of refugees to seek sanctuary somewhere to the east. Most would become slaves of the goblins. The rest were less fortunate.



Owner History

1. The Crazy Coal of The Dipped Spears , founded Archcrystal in 72

And all the while, Archcrystal, sat silent, tucked away within the dense jungle, seemingly hidden from the world's troubles. Its royal family focused inward both within themselves and within the rocks.

Doren finished the last of the documents, sending the last migrant away. She couldn't have been more than 7 years old and lost her family to the armies tearing the world apart. Doren felt a small hint of guilt creep into his chest. He took another long breath in of

jungle air. It tasted foul now. Another horrifying cloud must be on its way, he thought. He rolled his eyes at himself.

“Lass!” he shouted.

The child turned towards him questioningly.

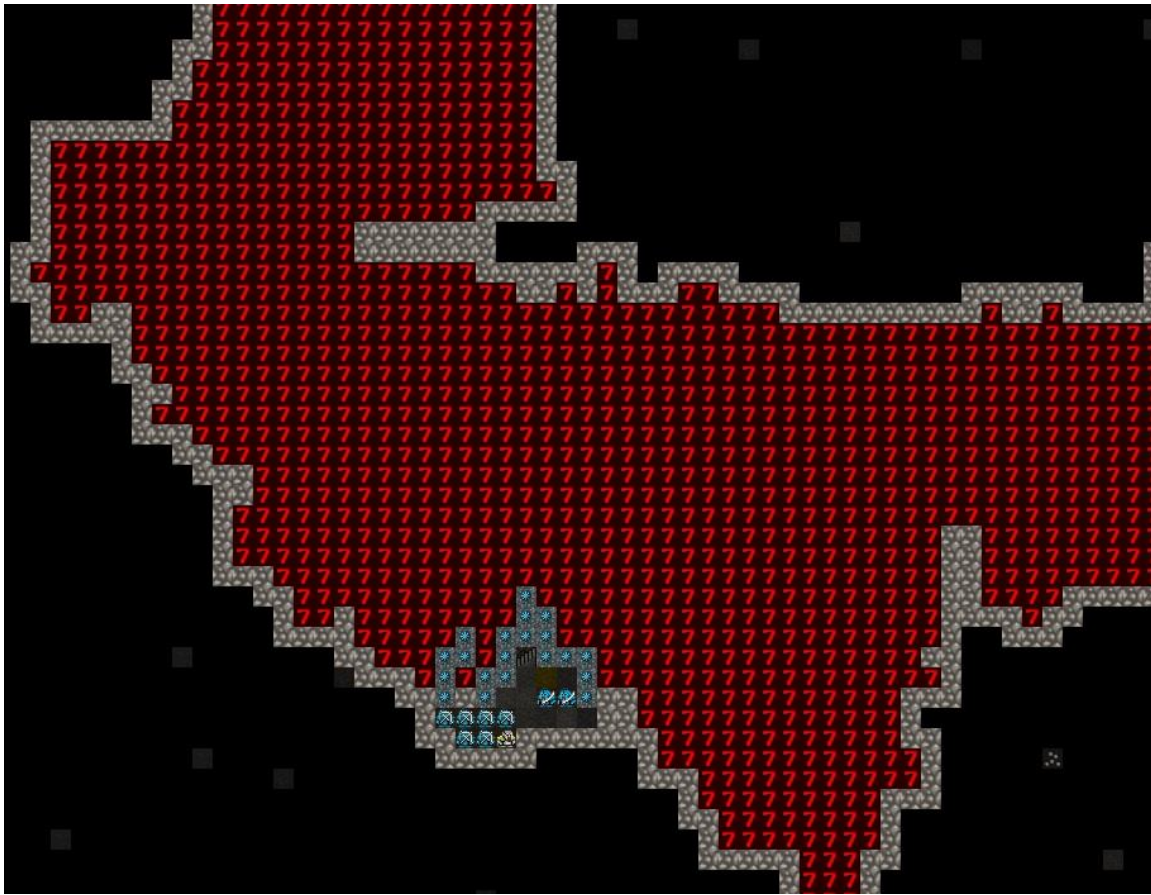
“That way,” he sighed and pointed to the caravan cresting the hill on its way out of the jungle.

Her eyes brightened and she blew him a kiss, and then ran towards the wagons. Doren grumbled before shuffling inside.

I’m getting old, he thought. Better watch out, or I’ll become human.

22nd of Timber Year 318
246th Year of Archcrystal
Icy Glass Walls

Doren’s marksdwarves crouched silently along the rough adamantine rock face. They were tuned intently on the mark in the floor where Asob was going to dig the hole. Just below them was a pack of 20 or so demons laying in wait to ambush them. Opposite the marksdwarves, standing out in the complete open beside the mark in the floor, were Moldath and Iton. They were chatting loudly, oblivious to any tension in the air.



“How many demons are there this time?” asked Moldath loudly.

“Shouldn’t you know? You’re older and know everything, remember?” replied Iton.

“That doesn’t mean I can count through walls.”

“Well, this is a floor.”

“A floor is just a wall that’s horizontal. It’s the same thing.”

“That’s the dumbest thing you’ve ever said.”

“You’re the dumbest thing I’ve ever said.”

“That doesn’t make any sense either.”

“Of course it does, I’ve said “Iton” before. There, dumbest thing I’ve ever said.”

“You have absolutely no timing or delivery.”

“Good, I didn’t say it for you.”

“Good!”

“Good then!!!!!”

It went on like this for some time and Doren the sheriff rolled his eyes. Maybe this time they would get eaten. Somehow, he knew he wouldn't be so lucky. At last Asob was ready to make the final cut into the stone floor. With a pick in one hand, and a baby in the other, she looked to Doren, who paused briefly before nodding. The marksdwarves took aim and the final cut into the floor was made.

The stone crashed through the floor and bounced heavily off of a few large demonic bodies below. Asob quickly fled up the stairs with her baby to safety. A moment later several demons screamed through the opening and were met with a hail of well aimed crossbow bolts.



Moldath and Iton had barely stopped talking before the sisters at heart began slashing their swords through the monstrous masses. They seemingly went into a trance like state while fighting.

The Pterosaur Brute misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster slashes The Pterosaur Brute in the right wing with her
 Mishimibmat and the severed part sails off in an arc!
 The Pterosaur Brute attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
 The Swordmaster stabs The Pterosaur Brute in the upper body with her
 Mishimibmat, tearing the muscle!
 The Pterosaur Brute misses The Swordmaster!
 The Horned Banshee attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster punches The Horned Banshee in the first horn with her
 left hand and the severed part sails off in an arc!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Horned Banshee attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
 The Swordmaster slashes The Horned Banshee in the head with her
 Mishimibmat, breaking away half of the tissue!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster slashes The Horned Banshee in the right foot with her
 Mishimibmat, breaking away half of the tissue!
 The Horned Banshee attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster kicks The Horned Banshee in the upper body with her left
 foot, breaking away the tissue!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the right upper leg with her
 Mishimibmat, breaking away a piece of the tissue!
 Holdath Fikodastel, Swordmaster: This is my fight too. There is no
 need to feel vengeful!
 The Salt Phantom attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
 The Swordmaster strikes The Salt Phantom in the lower body with her
 Matorial, breaking away half of the tissue!
 The Swordmaster slashes The Horned Banshee in the right upper leg with
 her Mishimibmat and the severed part sails off in an arc!
 The Horned Banshee strikes at The Swordmaster but the shot is blocked
 with Matorial!
 Holdath Fikodastel, Swordmaster: I have a part in this. I will take
 revenge!
 The Horned Banshee strikes at The Swordmaster but the shot is blocked!
 The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the lower body with her
 Mishimibmat, breaking away a piece of the tissue!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Haunt Of Snow misses The Swordmaster!
 Holdath Fikodastel, Swordmaster: I cannot just stand by. There is no
 need to feel vengeful!
 The Swordmaster kicks The Haunt Of Snow in the left upper leg with her
 right foot and the severed part sails off in an arc!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Haunt Of Snow misses The Swordmaster!
 The Salt Phantom misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster punches The Horned Banshee in the right foot with her
 left hand and the severed part sails off in an arc!
 The Salt Phantom misses The Swordmaster!
 The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
 The Haunt Of Snow misses The Swordmaster!
 The Haunt Of Snow misses The Swordmaster!
 The Swordmaster slashes The Horned Banshee in the lower body with her
 Mishimibmat, breaking away half of the tissue!
 Z: Zoom to location Announcement Date: 22nd Timber 318

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The Swordmaster slashes The Pterosaur Brute in the left upper leg with
her Mostodrinul Danmansibosh fracturing the bone!
A tendon has been torn!
The Pterosaur Brute misses The Swordmaster!
The Swordmaster stabs The Pterosaur Brute in the left wing with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh chipping the bone!
A tendon has been torn!
The Mostodrinul Danmansibosh has lodged firmly in the wound!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I cannot just stand by I will take
revenge!
The flying pterosaur brute extract misses The Swordmaster!
The Pterosaur Brute strikes at The Swordmaster but the shot is blocked
with Legannish!
The Swordmaster pulls on the embedded Mostodrinul Danmansibosh
The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the left foot with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away a piece of the tissue!
The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I cannot just stand by I will take
revenge!
The Horned Banshee attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the right wing with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away a piece of the tissue!
The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the lower body with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away a piece of the tissue!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: This is my fight too There is no need
to feel vengeful
The Horned Banshee misses The Swordmaster!
The Horned Banshee strikes at The Swordmaster but the shot is blocked!
The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the right lower leg with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away half of the tissue!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I have a part in this There is no
need to feel vengeful
The Swordmaster slaps The Horned Banshee in the head with the flat of her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away half of the tissue!
The Swordmaster slashes The Horned Banshee in the head with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away a piece of the tissue!
The Swordmaster stabs The Horned Banshee in the neck with her Mostodrinul
Danmansibosh breaking away half of the tissue!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I cannot just stand by There is no
need to feel vengeful
The Horned Banshee attacks The Swordmaster but She jumps away!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I have a part in this I will take
revenge!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: This is my fight too I will take
revenge!
The Swordmaster stabs The Salt Phantom in the right upper leg with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away half of the tissue!
The Salt Phantom strikes at The Swordmaster but the shot is blocked with
Legannish!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I have a part in this I will take
revenge!
The Swordmaster stabs The Salt Phantom in the upper body with her
Mostodrinul Danmansibosh breaking away half of the tissue!
Iton Letmosnunok Swordmaster: I have a part in this I will take
revenge!
z: Zoom to location Announcement Date: 22nd Timber 318

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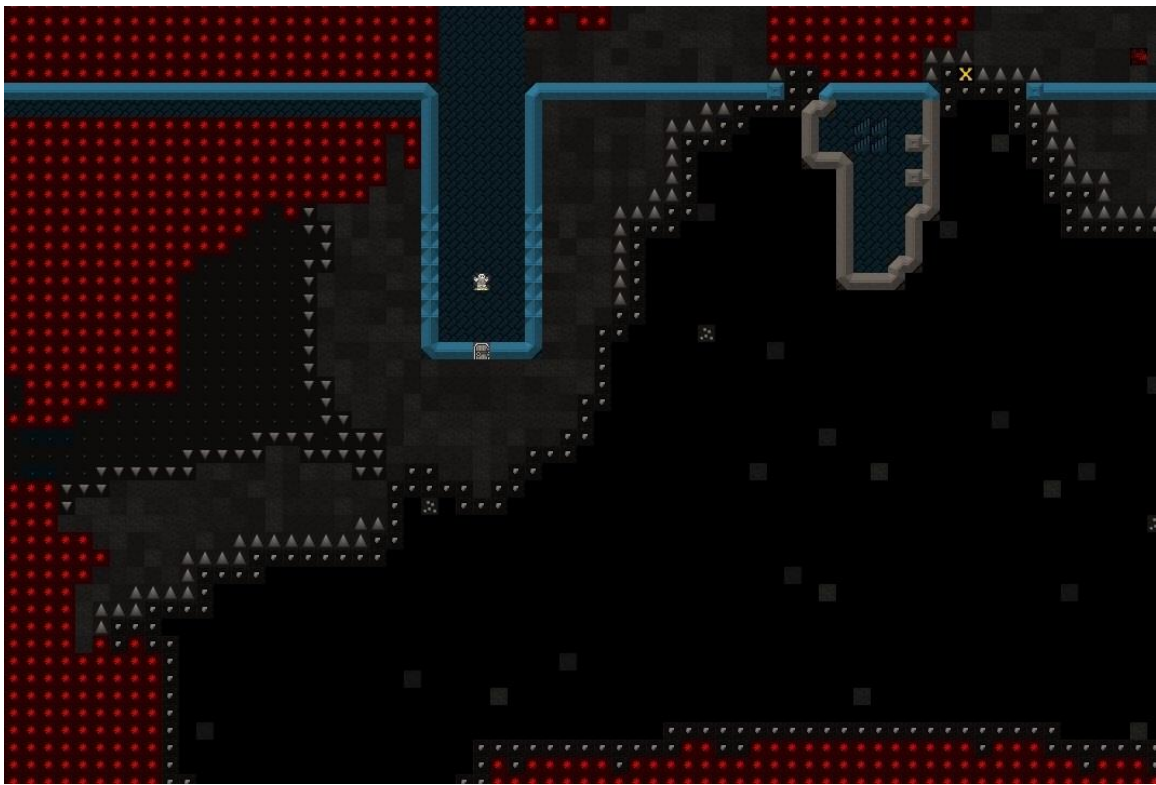
The two swordmasters acrobatically leapt over one another, twirling and flipping in a whirlwind of blades and strikes. More steel bolts rained down on ascending demons in rapid succession. But a marksdwarf, Zasit, advanced too quickly for a clean shot, and was grabbed and pulled below by a lightning fast salt phantom where he was overwhelmed quickly.



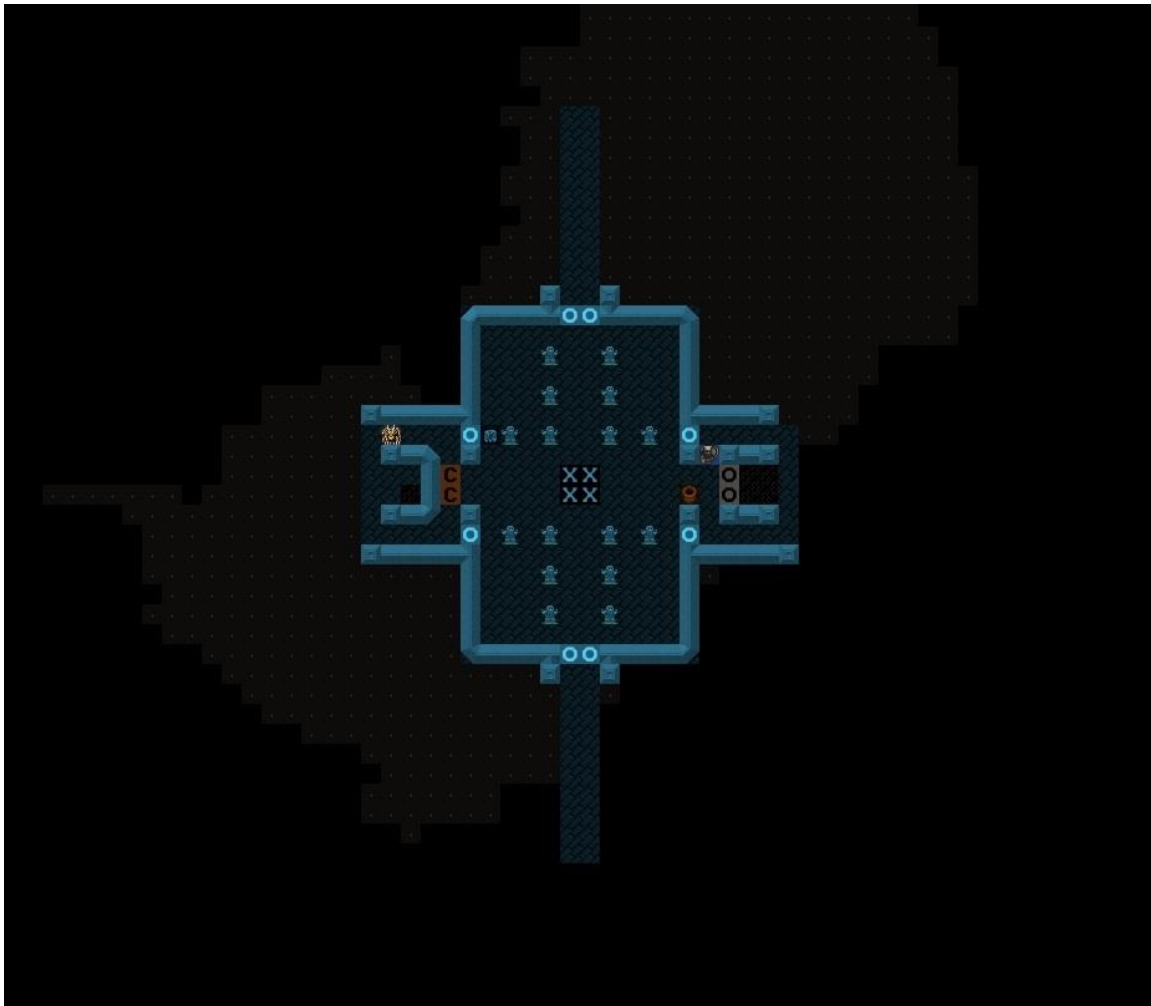
Doren shouted angrily through gritted teeth, “Hold your line, you filth, or the next one gets thrown in.” Moldath and Iton continued their dance of destruction, until finally their spinning blades had no more moving parts to cut. They looked around at the carnage of severed limbs and demon body parts before smiling at one another.

“I think they’re all dead!” they announced simultaneously to the sheriff.

After a thorough search, it was determined that there were no more demons in the area. Shortly after the battle, the walls were completed. An artifact door was placed at the sole entrance to the fort just in time as more demons began to appear outside the glass barriers.



The other dwarves began working quickly creating the entrance hall for the new fortress.



Furniture that had been decorated for centuries was just now being put into place. The glass fortress in hell began to spread outward from the center like an icy virus within an unsuspecting host.

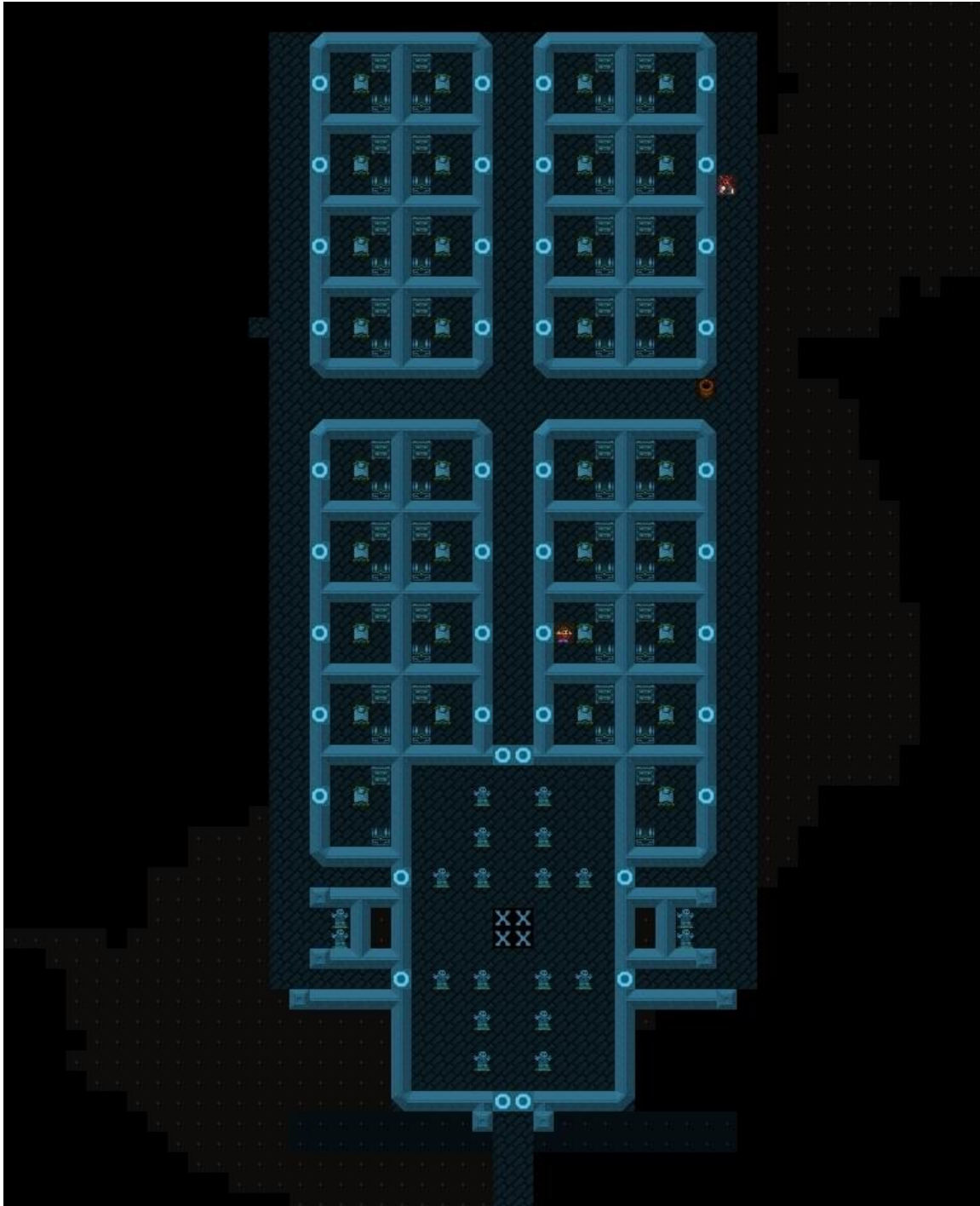
Meanwhile, Avuz Girderwhip had a lot to do. She was the unofficial chief engineer of Archcrystal.

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Avuz Thobbonrek #Avuz Girderwhip Crafts dwarf FPS: 100 (25)
She is blissful after sleeping in a great bedroom. Within the last season she didn't feel anything after
seeing a giant tiger die. She felt pleasure near a completely sublime Seat. She felt pleasure near a fine Door. She
felt satisfied after receiving water. She felt satisfied at work.
She is the daughter of Hinket Faithfulrocks and Onul Daychamber. She is a worshipper of Kadal a worshipper of
Athen Insightspeared the Poetic Watchfulness a worshipper of Kadal and a faithful worshipper of Akan.
She is a citizen of The Dipped Spears. She is a member of The Crazy Coal.
She is forty-nine years old born on the 15th of Granite in the year 271.
She is corpulent. Her very long hair is tied in a pony tail. Her emerald eyes have thin irises. Her quite dense
eyebrows are high. Her hair is copper. Her skin is pink.
She is absolutely inexhaustible quite durable agile and strong.
Avuz Thobbonrek likes gypsum plaster steel brass opal giant sperm whale leather war hammers backpacks
anulets geese for their formation flying and orioles for their coloration. When possible she prefers to consume
flounder and custard-apple cider. She absolutely detests flies.
She has a stunning feel for spatial relationships unbreakable focus a very good sense of the position of her
own body very good intuition and an ability to read emotions fairly well. But she has poor analytical abilities and
has no natural magical ability.
Like others in her culture she holds craftsdwarfship to be of the highest ideals and celebrates talented
artisans and their masterworks greatly prizes loyalty values family greatly sees friendship as one of the finer
things in life believes that honesty is a high ideal greatly respects artists and their works deeply respects
those that work hard at their labors respects fair-dealing and fair-play values cooperation values leisure time
respects commerce and finds nature somewhat disturbing. She personally is appalled by merrymaking parties and other
such worthless activities finds the pursuit of skill mastery off-putting does not really value skills related to
fighting and doesn't feel strongly about the law. She dreams of crafting a masterwork someday and this dream was
realized.
She is not a private person and freely shares details of her life. She rarely looks on others with lust. She
does not find most jokes humorous. She is quite polite. She tends to think before acting. She doesn't focus on
material goods. She does not easily fall in love and rarely develops positive sentiments. She doesn't try to get
things done perfectly. She tends to hang on to grievances. She tends to avoid any physical confrontations. She likes
a little excitement now and then. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.
A short sturdy creature fond of drink and industry.

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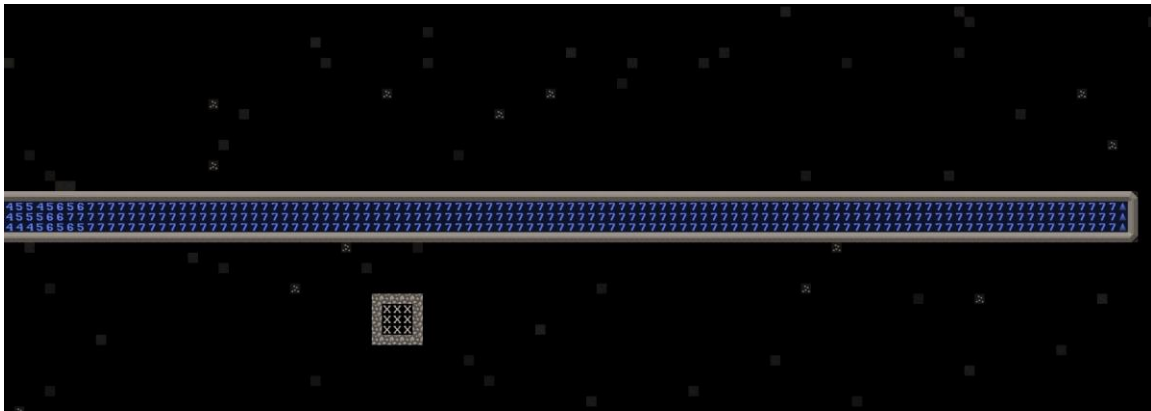
She directed the construction of clear glass in the workshops, as well as their placement within the fortress below. She spent ages with pen and paper plotting things out only to realize she'd made a mistake here or a miscalculation there, and everything would have to be moved and replaced. But the fortress was progressing nonetheless. The bedrooms were now numerous enough to move the general population down into hell.



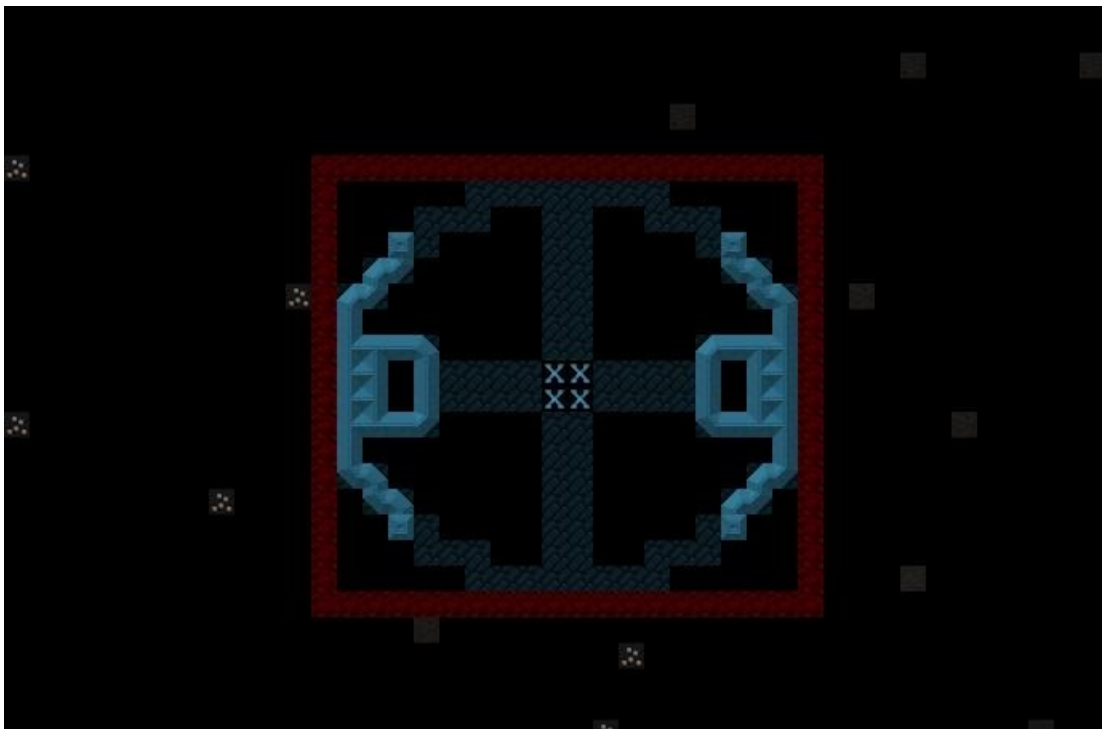
There was a new dining hall constructed with future plans to host guests and rent rooms.



Ornate windows were placed on the West and East sides that would eventually allow patrons to view the waterfalls that would come down through the chasm – magma on the west wall, and water on the east wall. Magma would be used for the forges while water would be for the wells and hospital. These would be powered by the underground river that the dwarves made to turn the water wheels.



Above them were carefully holes in the glass tower that was now 5 levels high.



5 levels down, 142 to go. Avuz narrowed her eyes. She did enjoy a challenge. She also knew that little by little , her persistence would prevail. She leaned on a clear glass statue

in the new main hall. It was a beautiful depiction of Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales made over 200 years ago. All of the dwarves in Archcrystal could trace their lineage back to him and his wife Cerol Treatyrims the Dark Zeal which made for confusing familial relationships. The statue, like all the others told wonderful stories to those that looked.

PS: 100 (25) «clear glass statue of Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales»
 This is a masterful clear glass statue of Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales created by Datan Almashmorul. The item is a masterfully designed image of Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales the dwarf and dwarves in clear glass by Datan Almashmorul. Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales is surrounded by the dwarves. The artwork relates to the appointment of the dwarf Bomrek Cradlecrafts the Waning Fence of Gales to the position of Militia Commander of The Crazy Coal in the midsummer of 73. It is encrusted with exceptionally worked oval gneiss cabochons, exceptionally worked round slate cabochons, exceptionally worked rectangular mica cabochons and masterfully worked round gabbro cabochons by Thikut Nokimlebes. It is studded with finely-crafted brass and exceptionally worked copper, decorated with exceptionally worked giant tiger bone and encircled with bands of masterfully worked rutherer bone by Asen Sazirunib Ilirar Edos. Masterfully worked cushion velvet spessartane cabochons by Litast Cognetui, exceptionally worked rectangular quartzite cabochons and masterfully worked oval granite cabochons by Thikut Nokimlebes. This object is adorned with hanging rings of exceptionally worked lead and necklaces with spikes of exceptionally worked diorite, exceptionally worked zinc, exceptionally worked shulerite, exceptionally worked marble and exceptionally worked bismuth bronze. On the item is an exceptionally designed image of Shin the deity of the sky and the moon depicted as a female dwarf and a dwarf in indigo tourmaline by Litast Cognetui. The dwarf is praying. Shin is contemplating. On the item is an exceptionally designed image of thin crosses in tanzanite by Litast Cognetui. On the item is an exceptionally designed image of Akon Servanthobbled the forgotten beast and Helbil Honsionape the Symetric Intensity the dwarf in billion by Obak Sashskubok. Helbil Honsionape the Symetric Intensity is shooting Akon Servanthobbled. The artwork relates to the shooting of the forgotten beast Akon Servanthobbled by the dwarf Helbil Honsionape the Symetric Intensity with a copper belt from The Abusual Owl in Archcrystal in the midspring of 112 during The Rampage of the forgotten beast Akon Servanthobbled in Archcrystal. On the item is an exceptionally designed image of Tradeglided the spore tree scepter in schist by Litast Cognetui.

Somehow, knowing that there was a long storied history to all of the pieces, it gave her the resolve to continue with her enormous puzzle.

*1st of Granite Year 322
 250th Year of Archcrystal
 A New Hell*

Doren the Sheriff shifted uncomfortably in his new armor. The king had bestowed a new title on him – Captain of the Guard. There had been a baby boom since the walls went up in hell securing the fortress and fifty-three dwarves now called Archcrystal home, so the king decided on a few grander titles. King Ushrir elected himself mayor, and decided to give the guardsmen a little more pomp and circumstance. Doren preferred to present himself modestly, and frowned on any flashy accoutrements, but an important day was almost upon them. It was almost the 250th anniversary of the fortress. Offerings were planned to the gods, as well as games and tests of skill. Doren, who was rarely happy or enthusiastic, but was conflicted by this as he valued parties and merrymaking in the abstract, he would grumble internally but put on a good show.

On the first day of spring, the celebrations began!

A rutherer was slaughtered, one for each of the dwarven gods. The Cave dragons were decorated with war paint on their gigantic bodies with great colorful flourishes of purple plump helmet and blue dimple cup. The new glass dining hall in hell was embellished with large silk banners woven from red and green demon webs. A great feast was prepared and the many children skipped towards the dining hall with wide-eyed anticipation.

Before the feast the entertainment was set to begin, as Doren and his newly regaled fortress guard marched and paraded away from the dining hall towards the glass entrance into the rest of hell. For months demons had started to gather at the artifact door, seemingly hypnotized by the great dwarven entrance. The fortress guard stepped into their positions across from the fortifications. They ceremoniously formed two rows, one

in front on one knee and one in back standing, as they readied their crossbows. The king rang a large brass gong and the marksdwarves opened fire.



A great cheer went up from the crowd in the dining hall as they watched the first volley rip through several of the targeted demons. These were some of the few demons made from flesh, great pterosaurs, and they howled with anger as the bolts struck them. Volley after volley tore through muscle and bone as they attempted to shield themselves in vain with their wings and other appendages. Opened arteries gave satisfying spurts of blood like synchronized fountains splattering on the glass walls and staining the slade floor. The onlookers and merrymakers watched with glee, while feasting on the same flesh which they were watching get ripped apart before their eyes. Juicy fats dripped down the chins of the children as they hollered and whooped every time Doren barked, “Fire!” They laughed as a leg came off causing a demon to stumble, they taunted as one desperately tried to shield itself behind another, they clapped wildly as steel bolts ripped apart a demon’s mid-section spilling its putrid guts, and they cackled as it wearily tried to put them back inside it’s body while struggling to avoid another flurry of flying, shining steel.



As the last demon lay dying, the crowd at the feast cried for more, chanting and clapping. Great pools of blood and twitching corpses were all that remained in the entrance way, so they turned back to their feasting, gorging themselves on succulent roasts of demon flesh. They watched as the butchers dragged the corpses inside with heavy iron hooks, one by one, carving the large bodies and bringing the cuts of the best meats to the king before feeding the others slices of juicy flesh.



The celebration continued in the glass hall, the bone carvers made toys and jewellery from the bones and teeth of the pterosaurs, and large totems from their skulls to adorn the hallways. The statues of their ancestors, who came here 250 years ago, looked on as the soft eerie glow of the pits cast a pale light on the decadence and voracity of the dwarves of Archcrystal in their new home.

4th of Granite Year 332
260th Year of Archcrystal
Invasions

Since the great feast 10 years ago, progress on the fortress of clear glass was steady, but slow. The glassmakers worked day and night building the blocks with dwarven precision to create the floors and walls within hell. The Magma pit was complete and the floor above it was half finished.





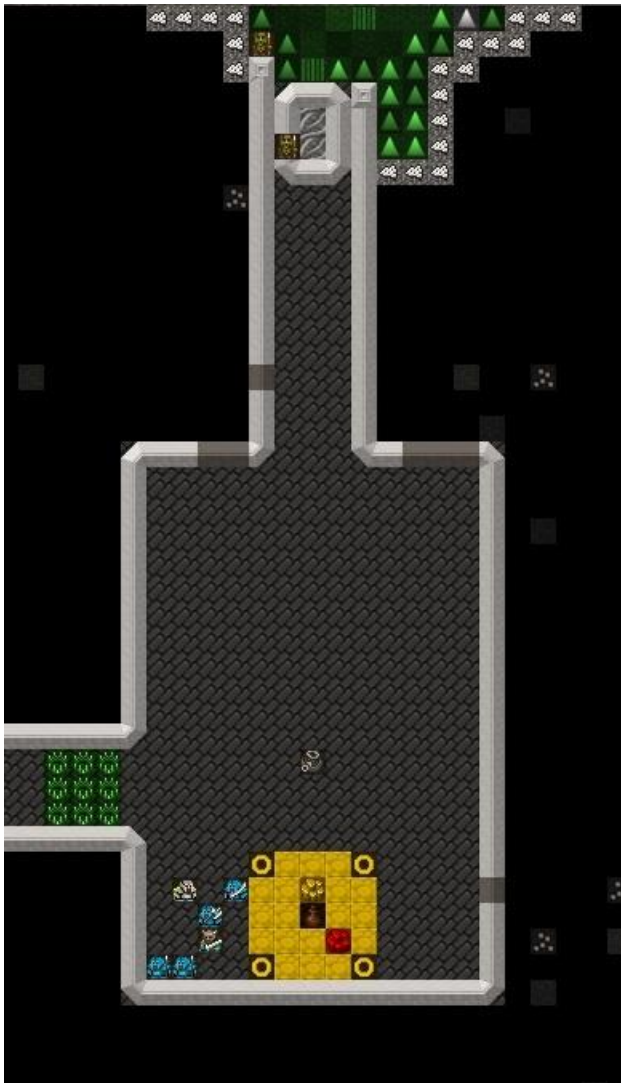
The great tower of clear glass rose from the center of hell and was now through the semi molten rock and climbed now through the magma sea.



Soon Magma would fall from the sea and into hell to power the forges.

Archcrystal was experiencing a baby boom as well. 89 dwarves now called the fortress home. All of them born and raised in the underworld, some of them 6 generations removed from the founders. 39 children ran through the deep glass halls alongside the eerie glowing pits watching the demons swirl around the fortress. They ate and drank the cooks and brewers into constant states of fluster. They worked constantly beside the glassmakers to meet up with demand.

Moldath and Iton were training some of the new recruits who had finally grown large enough to put on armor, when there appeared a visitor at the entrance.



It was the strangest elf Moldath had ever seen, and he was early to begin trading.

“Hello?” said Moldath squinting.

“Are you lost?” asked Iton.

The creature charged at the two dwarves, and they looked each other questioningly. It raised its spear high above its head before Moldath sent its head from its shoulders in one quick slash. The body skidded to a halt on the smooth chalk floor. Outside they could hear movement. Whatever this thing was, there were more on their way.



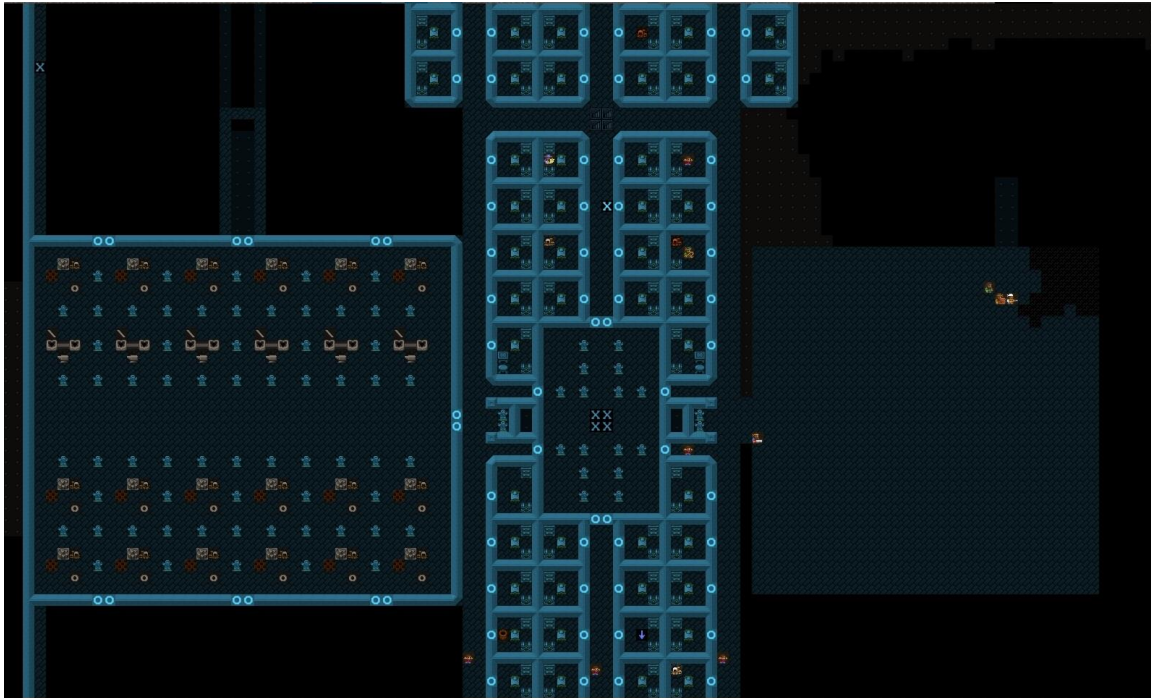
The group rushed the entrance, but were no match for the battle hardened dwarves and brutally sharp weapons of adamantine. The battle was quick and Moldath and Iton stood above the goblin bodies examining their facial features with the wide-eyed look of children discovering their first insect.

“At least it’s not as much mess as the zombie husks.”

They had never seen a goblin before, though many depictions existed of them on their furniture from the decorating floor. They looked smaller in real life.

18th of Opal Year 339
267th Year of Archcrystal
The Factory

Avuz Girderwhip, the chief engineer of Archcrystal, was beginning to see some of her work take shape. The forges were ready for magma to be brought down and work was nearing completion on the factory floor for the other workshops.

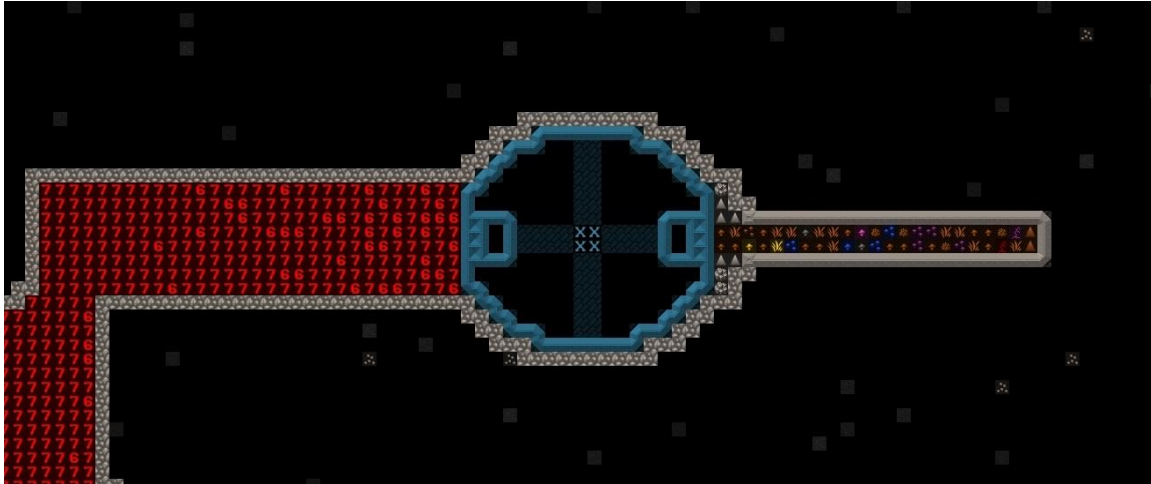


More bedrooms had been made and magma ducts and aqueducts of glass began to criss cross below in order to take the liquids through the fort when they were ready.

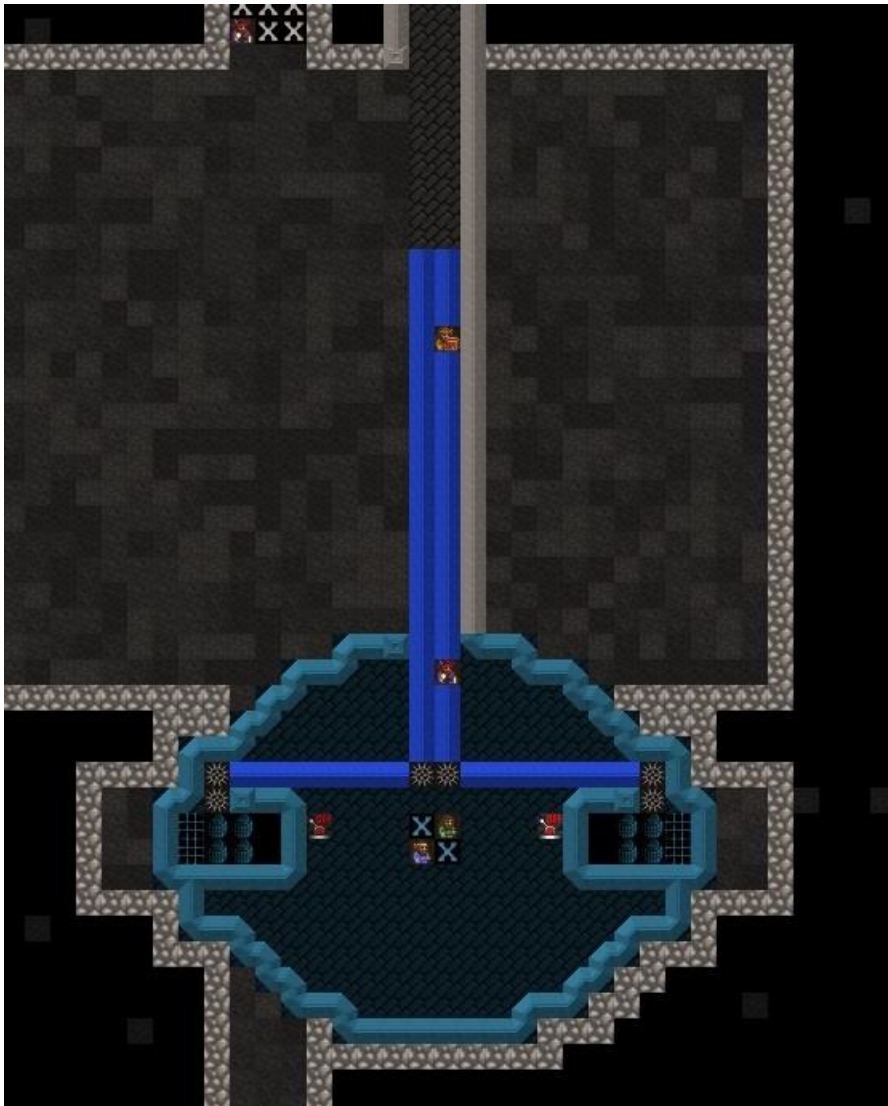


The work was painstakingly tedious to make enough clear glass blocks for everything as it took 100 blocks to make a simple 10 by 10 floor – and that was a month of production time. But at least it was steady. 15,000 clear glass blocks were used so far, and the new glassmakers were getting better at making more. The population was growing and more children were getting old enough to take on meaningful tasks.

The glass tower which was 22 stories now was about to reach the lowest cavern layer and preparations were made to bring magma to one side and water to the other.



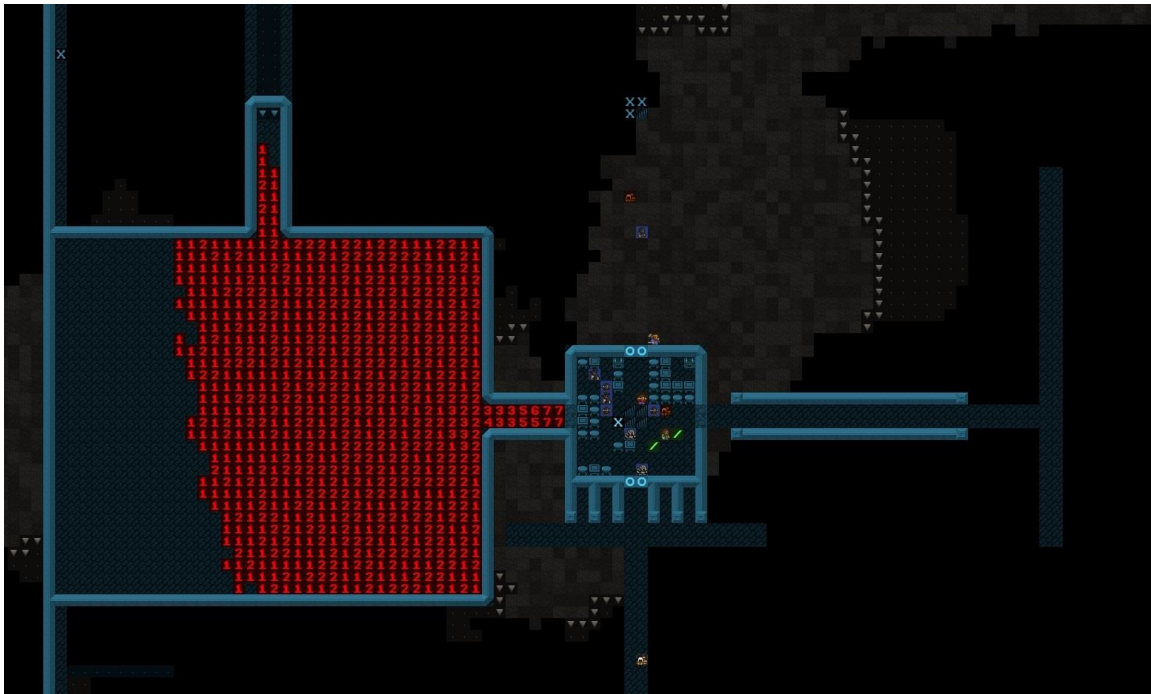
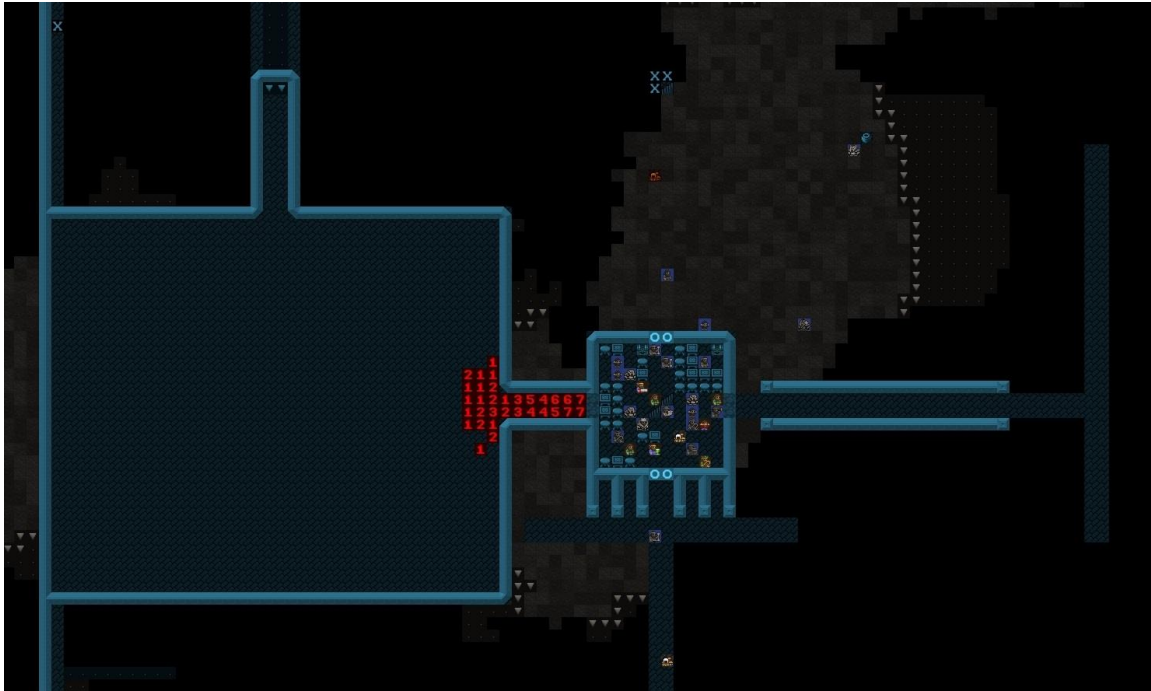
Avuz designed glass pumps one floor above to suck the liquids through grates to avoid any creatures getting into either liquid flowing through the inside of the fort. When it was finished it would create a magma fall down one side and a waterfall down the other side of the tower and bring water and magma down into the fortress.



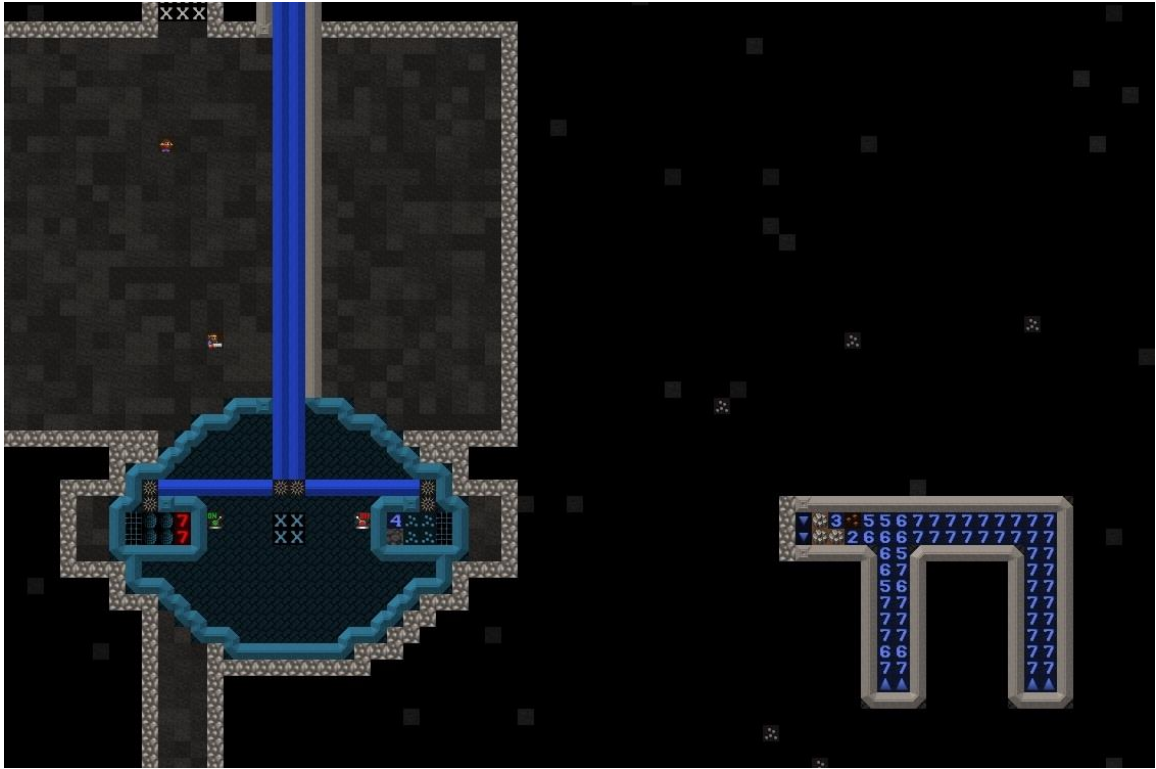
Avuz checked on the constructed underground river to make sure there would be enough power from the waterwheels. Grimy with gear grease and dirt on her face she directed traffic superbly and wasn't scared to get into the tough areas of the work as the finally the pumping system was taking shape.

Finally, as the last mechanism was slotted into place she gave the word for the glass crew pumps to be turned on and magma was sucked through the tubes like molten sunshine bathing the fortress in light on its way down into hell.





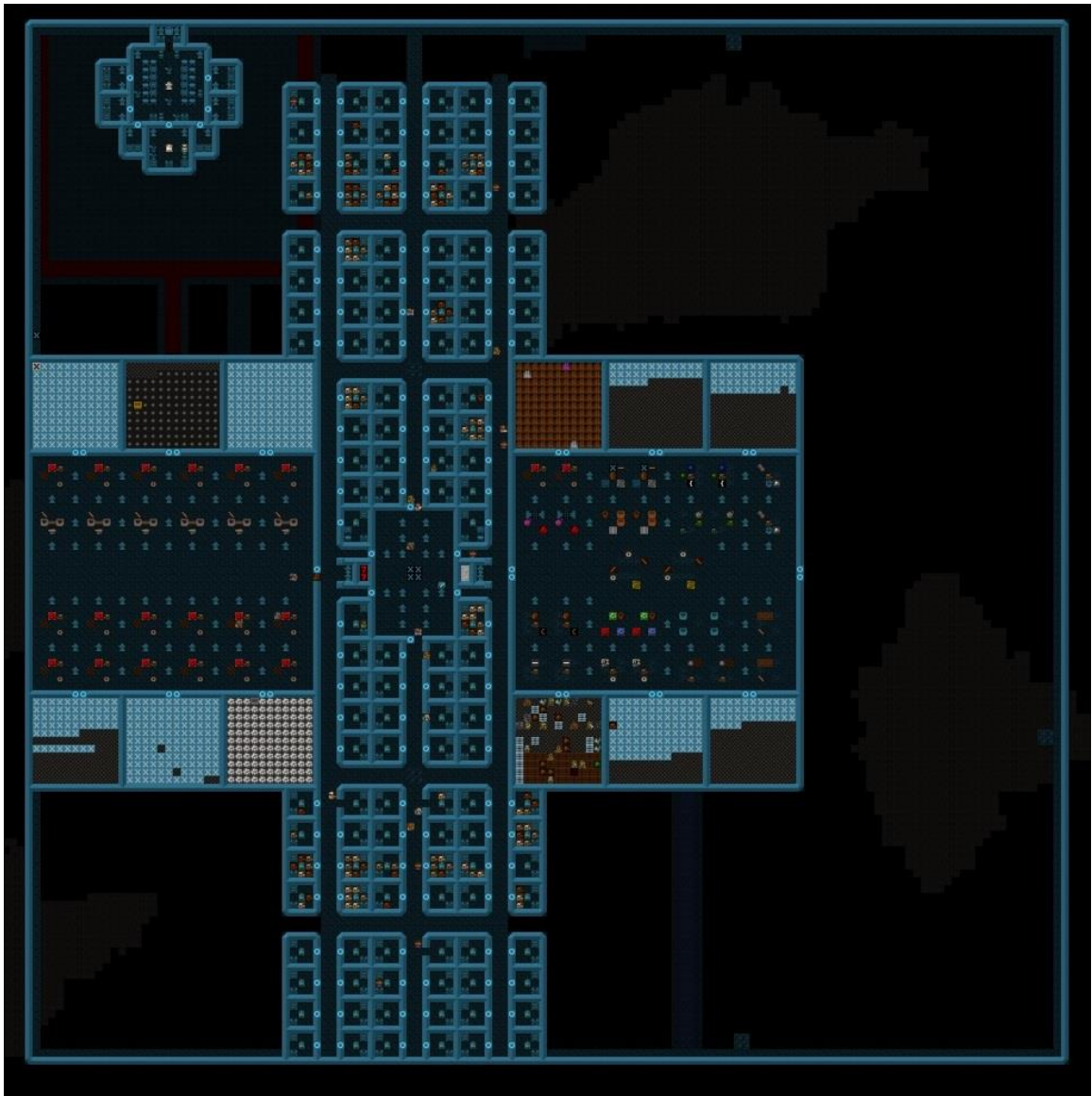
Next was the water. The aqueducts not only had to feed the wells in the hospital, but they also had to run far enough east to irrigate the farms. Building these took more effort and time, and Avuz wanted to avoid costly mistakes. At last, covered in axle grease yet again, she gave the order for the water pumps to be turned on.



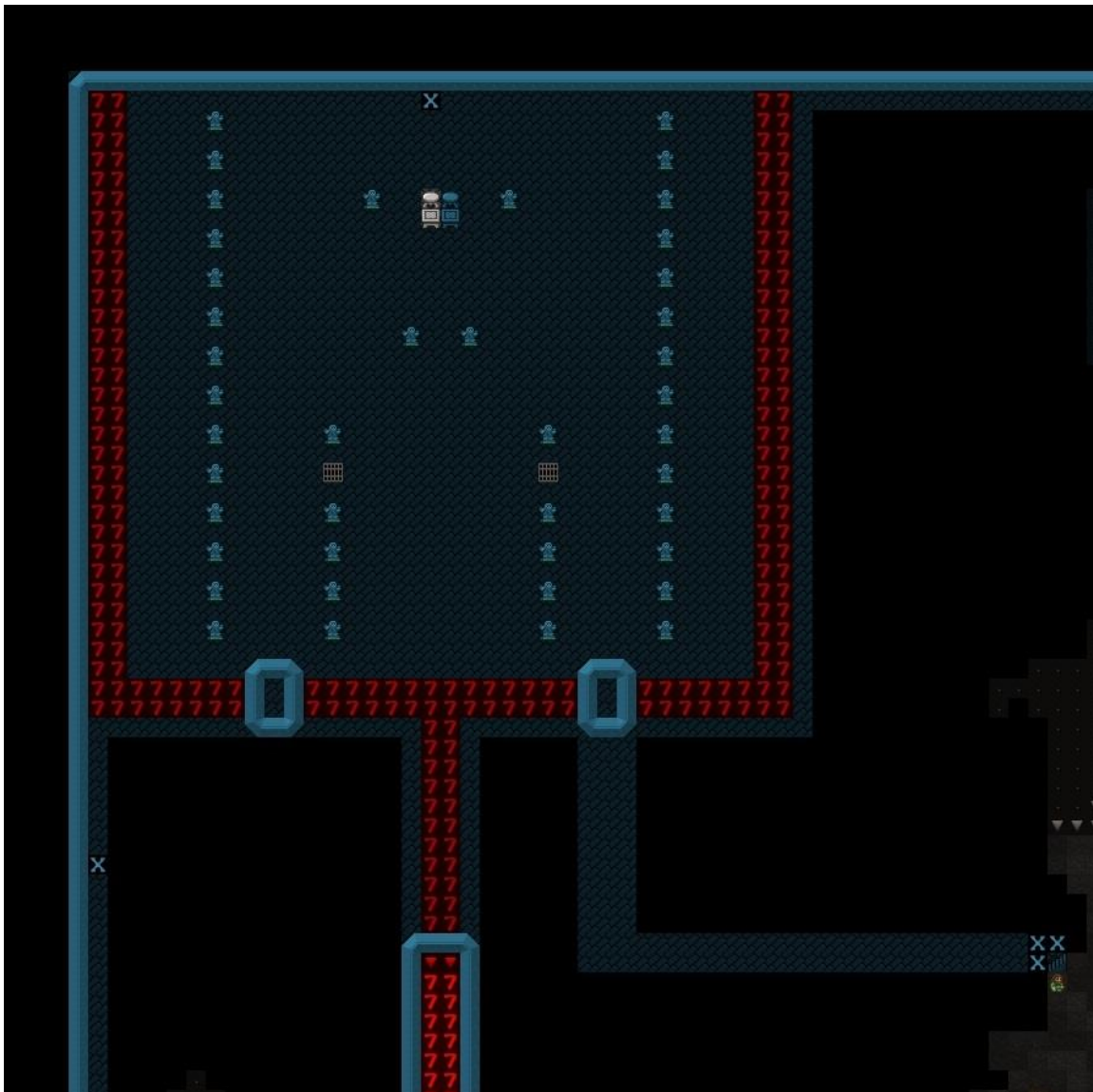
As the water flowed towards the farming plots, they were about to find out if plump helmets and cave wheat could grow in hell.



Simultaneously, Avuz also had to deal with king Ushrir's demands to divert resources to building his new private bed chambers in the northwest.



As well as his new throne room directly below it.



Avuz designed the magma moat to cover the throne room in shadows cast by the dwarven statues, and they all seemed to stretch long flickering hands towards the center of the room reaching for whomever would stand before the king of a new hell.

3rd of Limestone Year 352
280th Year of Archcrystal
Hidden Enemy

Doren Lashgrooved the sheriff of Archcrystal hurried up the glass staircase from the fortress in hell. He didn't have to climb many floors which was odd given the nature of the emergency. A dwarf had become exposed to the wicked soot clouds that roamed the evil jungle, which wasn't unheard of - it happened from time to time when someone ventured out carelessly. But this circumstance was strange in that the dwarf had turned into a mindless husk far below the surface close to hell. He arrived at the crime scene

flanked by his fortress guard, the two soldiers who had to put Urist down stood beside the body ready to give their report to the concerned sheriff who methodically eyed the surroundings during the debriefing. He nodded to the soldiers and reminded them to clean their weapons for when a husk zombie was slain the soot dust could still contaminate. A small amount even touching the skin was enough to transform a good dwarf into a mindless killing machine.

"How did it happen this far down?" grumbled Doren, more to himself, than guard beside him. They were close to the magma sea, miles below where the clouds on the surface could penetrate. Doren knelt beside the body of Urist, a young dwarven glassmaker, not yet thirty years old. His loss would be felt as the glassmakers were deeply respected in Archcrystal. Something had made its way this far down - a rat, or some other vermin perhaps, though there was never an instance before of this ever happening in the long history of the eternal fortress. Doren hated mysteries. He was a dwarf of calculation and certainty, and his intuition was ringing alarm bells that he couldn't decipher. It was paralyzing feeling tinted with doubt and he hated the idea that something nefarious or hidden held the possibility to bring down his ancestors glorious work from within behind the shadows.

"Question everyone who last spoke with Urist, and clean the damn body," he barked and his guards jumped to action. One of them brought his wooden folding table and chair and Doren set to his task of recording everything his mind could think of. Grumbling, and with no definitive conclusion Doren retired to get some much needed sleep. It didn't last long.

He awoke a hour later to shouting in the halls and the unmistakable sound of combat. Grabbing his crossbow he burst through the door to the workshops to see another husk zombie engaged with one of his guards and a furnace operator. Both dwarves were skilled and armed, but the crazed husk dwarf was relentless in its attacks, clawing and lunging quickly at the defenders. Bolts rained down on it from Doren, until at last enough well aimed projectiles collapsed its kneecaps and it fell clawing and writhing to the glass floor. The hammer that came crashing down its head ended its existence with an audible thud and all was silent for a time. The air was still filled with tension as Doren approached the corpse alerted but calm. This was now a crisis. Two dwarves in two hours infected far away from eachother deep below the surface was a threat that hadn't existed before and now more than ever he felt the alarmed intuition tug at his reason with urgency. This was important and it must be solved before more of them turned.

"Clear out!" he yelled, "Nobody touch it." He talked with the guard and the furnace operator as he inspected the body. Both of them reported that the victim was fine a few minutes earlier and had not been near the surface in months. He was fully clothed as well with gloves and shoes so there was little chance of any residue getting on his skin. Doren's brain was an inferno of frustrating possibilities burning through thoughts one after the other. As with all of the dwarves in Archcrystal the victim was a member of the militia and was on duty for martial training at the time he transformed. There had to be a connection between the two victims that he wasn't seeing.

"Kib," Doren motioned for one of his lieutenants, "check the training logs, see if the first victim was on military duty when he died." The guardsdwarf moved quickly to the militia commander's office as Doren meticulously laid out the second victim's belongings on his wooden folding table.

Moments later the guardsdwarf returned, "Sir, Urist was indeed on duty at the time. What does it mean?"

Doren nodded, "I'm not sure yet." Kib joined Doren looking through the victim's belongings and remarked, "You don't see those very often."

Doren raised an eyebrow, "What?"

Kib pointed at the small seed on the table, "That seed, sir. I'm herbalist when not on duty. That's a squash seed. We definitely don't grow those down here in hell."

Doren's mind raced. Finally there was a puzzle piece that didn't fit. Doren grabbed the first victim's backpack and dumped it onto the floor beside the table. Quickly searching until he found what he was looking for - a small seed.

"Where would they get squashes from?" Doren exhaled and his eyes narrowed.

"I know," the furnace operator spoke up, "remember the human caravan a few months back? They walked right into one of those clouds and tore each other apart. Not uncommon for those idiots from the Confederacy of Finding to wander right into one of them like blind cave bears. They had a whole wagon of squashes to trade."

"Idiots, these two must have grabbed a couple of them before we burnt them up," Kib said.

Doren stood thinking. That's how the contamination was getting past their clothes - they were *ingesting* it. "Maybe," he said thoughtfully, "Who was in charge of the burn?"

Kib answered, "Rovod the bookkeeper."

All of their eyes suddenly lit intensely as they all said in unison, "He's in charge of rations." They all raced towards the bookkeepers' office and Doren burst through the door.

"Where are the squashes!?!?"

"Wh.. What squashes?" Rovod said meekly.

"There's no time for this! Tell me where they are, or more people could die!"

“What! Die? I’m sorry... I’m so sorry, I love squashes, I couldn’t bear to burn them. They looked clean! I...I gave them to everyone in military training for their rations.”

Doren’s jaw dropped to the floor. “Kib, how many dwarves are scheduled for martial training today?”

“59”

They hurried out the door and Doren barked orders as they moved, “You three, take the barracks down here, Kib and I will go to the one near the surface, and hurry! They are all ticking traps waiting to go off.”

Doren and Kib had to climb the entire length of the tower to reach the regulars training near the top but they moved quickly and with purpose. They charged through the doors and before Doren could say anything Kib leapt across the room and batted a squash away from a soldier’s yawning mouth moments before it was too late.

“Hey! I was going to eat that!”

Doren ignored the soldier and shouted, “All the squashes on the floor, now!”

When Doren commanded everyone listened and they all jumped to attention and followed his orders placing all of the squashes in a pile in the center of the room.

“Kib, burn them.”

A hour later Doren was sitting in his folding wooden chair watching the embers from the burned squashes and other fuel glow and slowly go out. Kib stood beside him, “That was a close call, boss.”

“Too close. To think that one stupid mistake could have brought and end to all of this. We are far from invincible even with all of our success and I feel like I’m getting too old to defend against all of the uncertainty.”

Kib said nothing as Doren poked the embers with his sword. The glowing fuel reminded Doren of the eerie glowing pits in hell. “I stare at those bottomless pits down there sometimes. It’s unsettling, and I swear the more I do it I start to see things in them.”

“Like what?” asked Kib, a little surprised that Doren was having such a reflective moment.

“I’m not sure...” Doren paused a moment before continuing his thought, “Do you ever wonder why the demons never come up out of them?”

“Not really, I’m just glad they don’t. Maybe it’s better not to ask.”

“Maybe,” he let out a long exhale through his nose before he got up stretching his aching back. “I hate not knowing things.”

1st of Granite Year 372
300th Year of Archcrystal
Doren's Legacy

Moldath and Iton waited impatiently for the tricentennial ceremony to begin. Over the last few decades they had settled into middle age without effort or noticeable fatigue. In fact, most would say they were just now in their prime having accomplished so much already. They had each been bestowed with titles for their battle prowess which they both delighted in.

They looked at each other and sighed.

“Doren would have hated a ceremony like this,” said Iton.

“That's why he's not here,” said Moldath.

8 years ago Doren Lashgrooved, the Sheriff of Archcrystal seemed to realize his time was coming to an end. Well into his 150's he began to mutter to himself, withdrawing from society even more than usual. He still carried out his duties with his usual efficiency, but his mind seemed disturbed by something – something only he could understand. While they passed by his quarters, dwarves could hear him talking to himself, saying cryptic phrases to no one in particular.

“I can't slip back,” he would whisper. “I can't slip back into the immense design of things.”

The dwarves would pretend not to hear and continue on. He would be seen in the kitchens collecting random items like buckets or cave wheat supposedly furnishing his room as some had suggested. Every so often he would pass by the new library and mutter into his cloak. “The letters and numbers. They mean more. More than we think.”

He would eat alone in the dining hall talking constantly to his feet. “It's the way we survive, the way we exist.”

Most would politely move away.

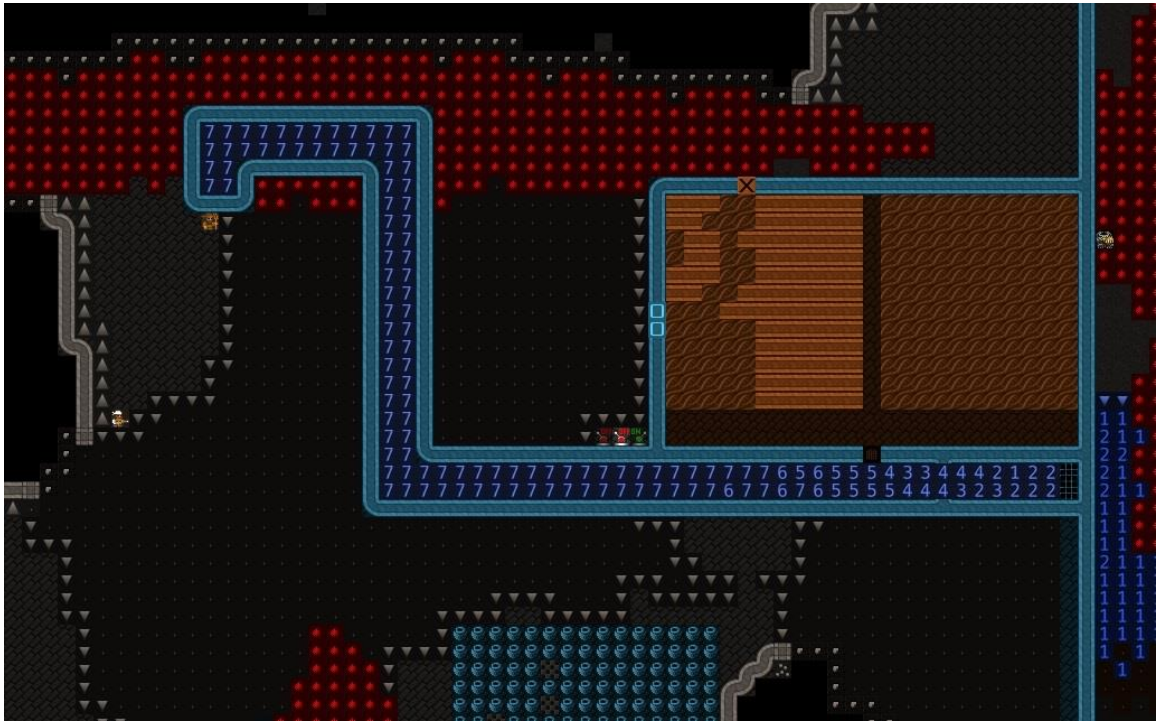
Despite his ramblings Doren still seemed very focused during drills and demon hunts. But his age was slowing him down. At last, the next year, Doren the sheriff passed away from old age.

This is a well-crafted microcline memorial to Doren Mengedtul. It is decorated with exceptionally worked rutherford bone. This object measures with spikes of superior quality gabbro. The slab reads: "In memory of Doren Mengedtul / Born 212 / Died peacefully in the year 368 / Creator of Bendriaged the Lock of Books / Captain of The Guard of The Crazy Coal / 319 to 368 / Hunter of Winged Friends"

He was laid to rest in the glass tower, with his folding wooden chair propped up next to him against the wall.

Moldath and Iton had prepared his funeral – a grand ceremony that Doren would have hated also. They giggled at this. At the same time Etur their militia commander had taken on the role of duchess, after the title had been given to merchant centuries ago. Etur named her own choice for captain of the guard to replace Doren. Ber was a lawful dwarf but not very capable and a poor marksdwarf. The others followed Ber only out of necessity.

It was not long afterwards that Archcrystal was officially named the mountainhome, despite having the crown for over 200 years already. The following years were very productive. The farms and hospital were finished.





The Wild Belly, a tavern in the middle of the fortress opened for business. Many marriages were held following its opening. It only seemed to attract goblins from the nearby Dark Fortresses who laughably pretended to not be spying, but they were tolerated until a seige came, and then quickly dispatched. The library was also finished even though the dwarves of Archcrystal had no idea how to make books.



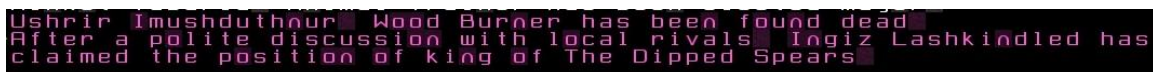
The furniture had centuries of writing and pictures on them anyway. As the population grew, so did the appetites of the dwarves, and it was becoming obvious that the rutherers would not be enough to provide a steady supply of meat. Fortunately, a mate was captured for the two Hydras already in captivity and a breeding program was started.



King Ushrir was starting to show his age as well. He made a habit out of getting drunk and belligerent in the tavern every night. One night he decided to pick a fight. Unfortunately for him, he targeted Moldath. As so often with happy go lucky people, Moldath had quite a temper when provoked, and besides being a deadly opponent in battle, she was not one to care where a challenge came from. The fight was brief.



After exploding the king's throat with a single punch, she went merrily on her way as if nothing untoward had just happened, and not even Erith the captain of the guard gave even a thought to arresting her. And so ended the reign of Ushrir Dikeguards. Many said he was about to die anyway given his age, but now a problem came about as who to name the next king as Ushrir never fathered any children. It was decided to avoid this problem in the future, and Ingiz Lashkindled was named the new king.



He is married to Asob Boltaction and has 46 children: Edem Gloweboulder the Parched Coal of Faiths, Sakzul Hamegrowled, Raga Channelpattered, Uzel Tattooed, Zefon Doorloads, Sibrek Hameinscribe, Zash Smithtarget, Elur Distancebreeze the Bitter Galley of Stalkers, Fikod Ironshoot the Calm Mire, Oddom Pillarfishes, Adil Callropes, Kaddi Boatpacks, Ben Delightsilver, Geshud Earthrages, Cog Squarequills, Vabok Stakefusted, Ristem Tradeddrip, Rai Housleanters, Doren Bronzeclashed, Tulga Copperbaddle, Ryuz Iawacalm, Ramel Handleshecks, Lokum Ungdiron, Hesthes Hameionbristled, Gaden Spallermachine, Thob Pickfusted, Ingish Floorpartners, Doren Rockices, Besmar Musclediamonds, Zefon Bronzeslapped, Erith Treestucured, Fikod Dragonfire, Hesus Takvelled, Lokum Raglarget, Oddom Cobaltphymes, Tekkud Boltsbeaks, Thob Plaitpulleys, Eral Numbercrafts, Zash Plankpalats, Fikod Archbored, Zan Guildinks, Ingish Divinemetal, Erith Rillcgravel, Gaden Armorballed, Zulban Tradedstockade and Rath Ringeddimple. He is the son of Iosid Hamegroome and Colten Copperaged. He is a worshipper of Kaddi, a worshipper of Kaddi and a casual worshipper of The Sugary Tricks. He is a citizen of The Dipped Spears. He is a member of The Crazy Coal. He is the former chief medical dwarf of The Crazy Coal. He is the former king of The Dipped Spears.

Ingiz was the widower of Asob Boltaction who had the renowned title of birthing the most children in the fortress – she gave birth 46 times. Ingiz was almost near the end of his life and the rest of them knew it, but at least he had a line of offspring that could take over the throne. This created another problem however as in dwarven culture it was not simply the eldest child who was the rightful heir, but the most qualified of them, so for the next year great debates were held in the tavern as 46 children played a game of thrones. A year later, Ingiz died, and his son Zan Guildinks at the age of 17 inherited the throne.

Zan Guildinks, being the rightful heir, has inherited the position of king of The Dipped Spears.

It was hoped that he would marry one of his cousins and continue the line.

The 300th anniversary had come and another goblin siege came with it, and once again Moldath and Iton had grinded them into paste. They brushed off bits of bone and brain from their armor as they waited for the celebration to begin.

“I wonder if the new king will be any good,” said Iton waiting her turn to march in the parade.

“I don’t think it matters,” replied Moldath.

“Why? Because you’ll punch that one to death too?”

“He started it,” smiled Moldath.

“What would Doren have said if he were alive, bout you, punchin’ a king to death, hmm?”

“He probably would have made me clean it up.”

“Darn right, he would.”

“Too bad he didn’t have any kids. They might have made a good king.”

“Well, he didn’t. We’ll just have to live with this one.”

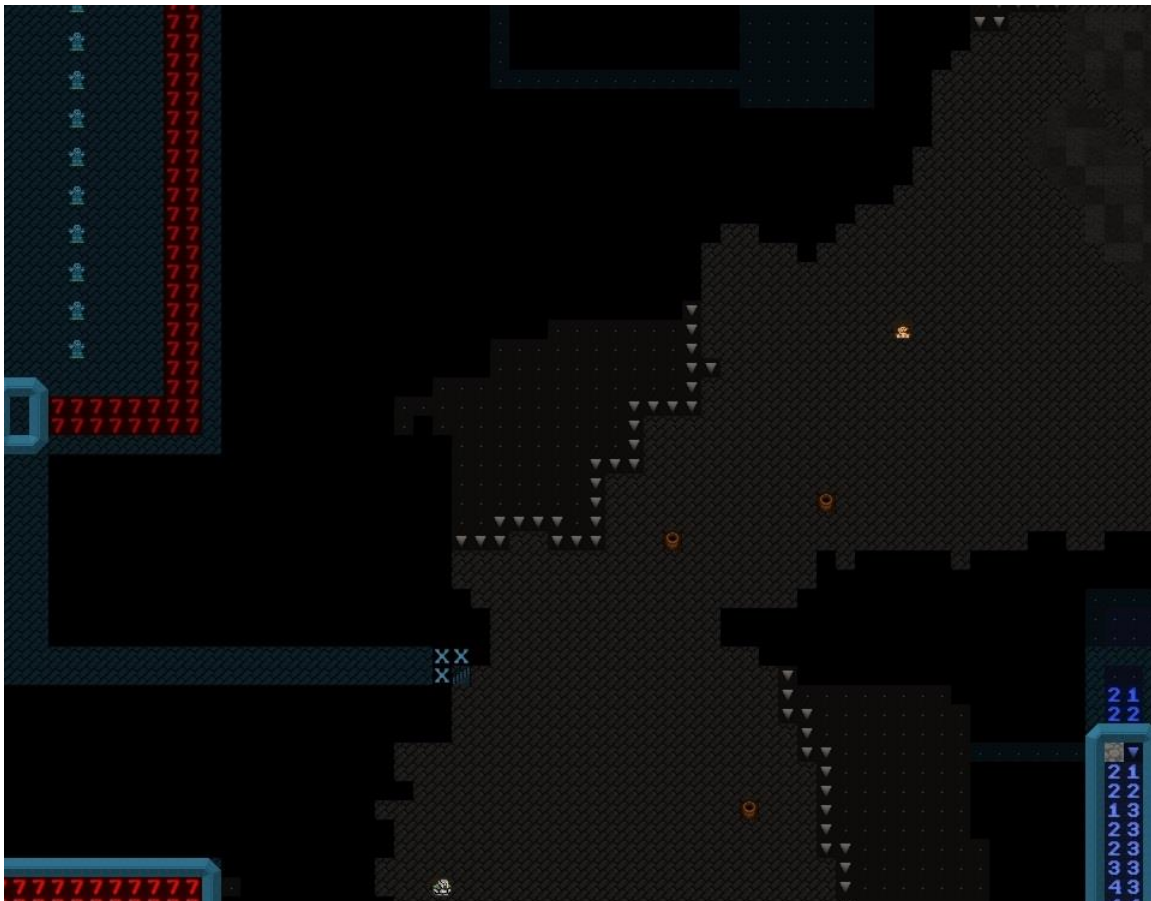
The trumpets blared and the procession marched through the halls waving their banners. Moldath and Iton led the way missing the former sheriff. But unbeknownst to them Doren Lashgrooved had made plans that were maturing even now.

1st of Moonstone Year 361
291st Year of Archcrystal
The Last Child of Asob

Fath Ringeddimple was born in the winter of 361, 11 years before the 300th anniversary of Archcrystal. He was the 46th child of Asob Boltaction and Ingiz Lashkindled, and as it turns out the last, as 3 months later Asob died in her sleep.



Fath as a baby continued on seeming to value his independence. There seemed something special about him, bright, clever, with a sharp stare that made him look older than the infant he was. He would wander the halls and smooth slade floors of hell on his own, crawling along without a cry or a whimper.



It was the stare that caught Doren the sheriff's attention. He knew his time was coming, and he decided he needed to pass on some knowledge. He started by feeding him and bringing him water. When he grew a little older, Doren would talk to him in his room, "I can't slip back. I can't slip back into the immense design of things. My name will come again, but I won't remember. Someone has to drive them. Otherwise everything will fade away."

He would collect cave wheat and buckets in the kitchen for him so he would have something to eat while he led the drills. Fath would hide in his cloak, and as they passed the library Doren would say, "The letters and numbers. They mean more. More than we think. If you look hard enough you can see them moving. You have to see things for what they are. Then you can direct them. Save them from themselves."

In the dining hall, Fath would sit under the table while Doren spoke, "It's the way we survive, the way we exist. They need a purpose and an enemy, otherwise the whole thing crumbles. Keep directing, don't stop. If you do, you're just the immense design... of something else."

The other dwarves of Archcrystal would not know of any of this. They had no idea what Fath would become.

3rd of Limestone 15th Year 392
320th Year of Archcrystal
40th Annual Squash Burning Day

"Happy Squash Burning Day!"

The greeting was repeated many times to Ucim Kasmuthe as he was invited down to the tavern for a drink and to await the king's audience. He wasn't exactly sure why they light great bonfires of squashes every year at this time – seemed like a waste of good food, but the dwarves he knew had plentiful stocks of exotic ingredients and their meals were as decadent as they come. Newborn Hydra was a delicacy unmatched by anything he had ever eaten.

Flanked by his guards he left the caravan to conduct business with the dwarves of Archcrystal. He knew from experience that "down" meant a fair bit more here than with the other dwarven fortresses. This time on his descent he remarked how far the glass tower had come. It climbed upwards like a frozen hand clawing its way to the surface, yearning to be free and unleash its inhabitants upon the world. It stretched over 60 stories now up from unimaginable depths where horrible nightmares made their home.



It was down here that Ucim was led. Descending the great tower of glass he could see into other worlds – large caverns that stretched for eternity into alien lands. Then past another layer of rock only to open to another world of caverns. The tower now served as a portal between worlds and ecosystems. Finally he could see through the walls into the great magma sea that covered the semi molten bedrock through to the horizon. But still they went down, at last reaching the entrance hall and finally the tavern. It was here, in the heart of hell, the dwarves of Archcrystal found solace and merrymaking. Ucim could see through everything, as it was all made of glass – into bedrooms, chambers, storerooms and jail cells. He could see through to the outer walls where the demons swirled against them in determined frenzy to gain entry somehow. Whatever artful technique the dwarves used to make the glass unbreakable seemed to confound their enemies. Ucim hoped it would last.



The meeting with the king was uneventful as it usually was, though Ucim worried about the recent attack of the elves on Archcrystal. At last it seemed the elves of The Circumstantial Dune had enough of the clear cuts the dwarves used to feed their furnaces. They attacked Archcrystal 2 years ago with over a hundred of their best archers. None survived.

Famime	Racaova	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Epeve	Enelairu	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Epeve	Ciloleathifi	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Fima	Facithilu	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Inevi	Elabeelede	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Athifi	Imererafici	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Imere	Caquiacithi	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Cethire	Alithaicemi	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Arane	Setheyarare	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Lora	Icithathilu	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Epeve	Yemenimina	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Amena	Cimathiadela	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Yare	Salolebovo	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Cequova	Nefolamave	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Imeva	Emofecaci	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Dafo	Icayerifafa	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Apasi	Sinaruiru	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Lali	Emidefiyi	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Zepave	Ludeafe	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Nemile	Ewirealu	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Mawada	Riniamala	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Ricote	Mameeefe	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Liceyi	Ricotelidava	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Epeve	Lebeyuceta	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Itha	Thanivinen	Elf	Bowman	Deceased
Fece	Oronimepe	Elf	Bwmn wckd st hsk	Deceased
Ririli	Icitechom	Elf	Bwmn wckd st hsk	Deceased
Amala	Amaali	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Etile	Caracaimimi	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Ave	Cifanoepeve	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Liyiyi	Lamayonali	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Pari	Amiyalimil	Elf	Bwmn wckd st hsk	Deceased
Yare	Mecalacata	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased
Nisa	Cifanolora	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Ethithi	Iferiimere	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Inefa	Awiridethe	Elf	Spearman	Deceased
Lesana	Iriveomo	Elf	Swordsman	Deceased

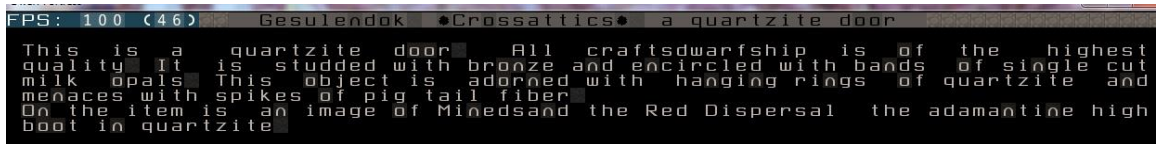
The elves made a hasty alliance with the goblins who sent yearly sieges attempting to take the fortress. It was said the goblins feared the dwarves might invade their capital of Hatejoined not from above, but from below. The idea of marching a dwarven army through hell to take the slade tower from beneath would seem absurd to any who did not know the dwarves here. Their brand of insanity was exceptional in this place.

After a few dwarven ales and stories that continued to boggle his mind, Ucim and his guards ascended the tower towards the surface to return home to the normal world. One of his guards turned to him and remarked, "I'm worried that when they complete their big tower, the demons might come out of it."

"I'm not," replied Ucim. "I'm worried that when they complete their big tower the dwarves might come out of it."

15th of Hematite Year408
336th Year of Archcrystal
Artifacts of Piety

Fath Ringeddimple, the last child of Asob Boltaction, sat cross-legged in a meditative trance in front of the artifact door.



“Cross Attics” was the single entrance into the fortress from hell and Fath would often sit before it determined to unlock its mysteries. It glowed with the ancient markings of his ancestors, and it was the unbreakable barrier between Archcrystal and the swirling legions of demons. He would sit and watch intently as the military often cleared demons from the entrance with ruthless efficiency. The thick glass walls distorted their bodies into even wilder shapes blending into one another casting shadows from the eerie glow of the pits. The shadows danced upon the young dwarf’s face, his eyes darting back and forth between the impossible shapes as they fought.

He was obsessed with the study of these artifacts which his ancestors had created. Fath himself was one of the last to create an artifact in Archcrystal, the art seemingly lost to the next generation, its inspiration spent. He was convinced there were answers within the seemingly random pictures and decorations of the founders – and it would be him that discovered their meaning. He recalled a phrase which Doren repeated to him over and over that echoed in his mind: “The Immense Design of Things”. Doren warned him not to slip back into it. Fath was convinced Doren had been touched by the gods and was being prophetic, and that the artifacts were the keys to it all. Especially the door.

Fath was a young adult now, strong and determined, but devoted like no other dwarf before him. He was dedicated to the divinity of the gods, and it was this piety that set him apart from the rest of his kin. Everyone respected and communed with the gods as it was their tradition and duty, but Fath was unique in his devotion for he actively preached their virtues in long sermons anywhere he could. He was feverish with bright-eyed conviction and a merciless gaze. Fath began decorating new temples to each god in the south district with precision and care.



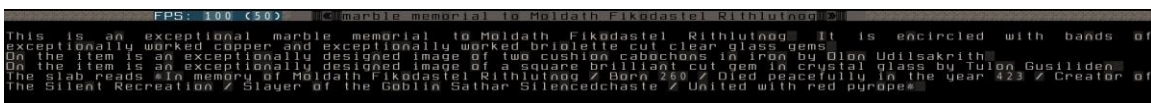
He diverted what resources he could, because the king and duchess were expanding the prisons in the eastern district to deal with the many dwarves who violated production orders. The populace had stopped being able to produce all of their demands, so they were thrown into prison and a semblance of martial law had rooted within the city. Fath found that bitterness towards the established authority could be transformed into religious zealotry rather easily. He smiled as his eyes drew imaginary lines across the great door. The lines hummed and throbbed and his vision distorted. He tried to make the lines blur between demon and dwarf with his eyes, between officer and citizen, and in that moment he knew where change resided – and why his ancestors created the artifacts they did.

8th of Malachite Year 429
357th Year of Archcrystal
Awake

Fath had worked tirelessly with spiritual conviction. The temples were nearing completion, but there were inner voices at work within his mind that he could not explain as divine guidance.

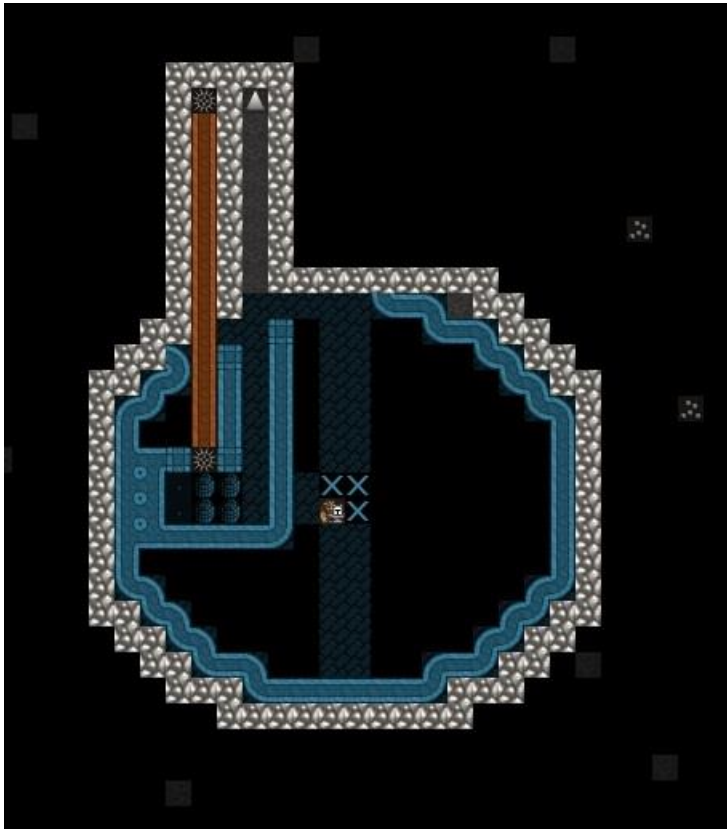


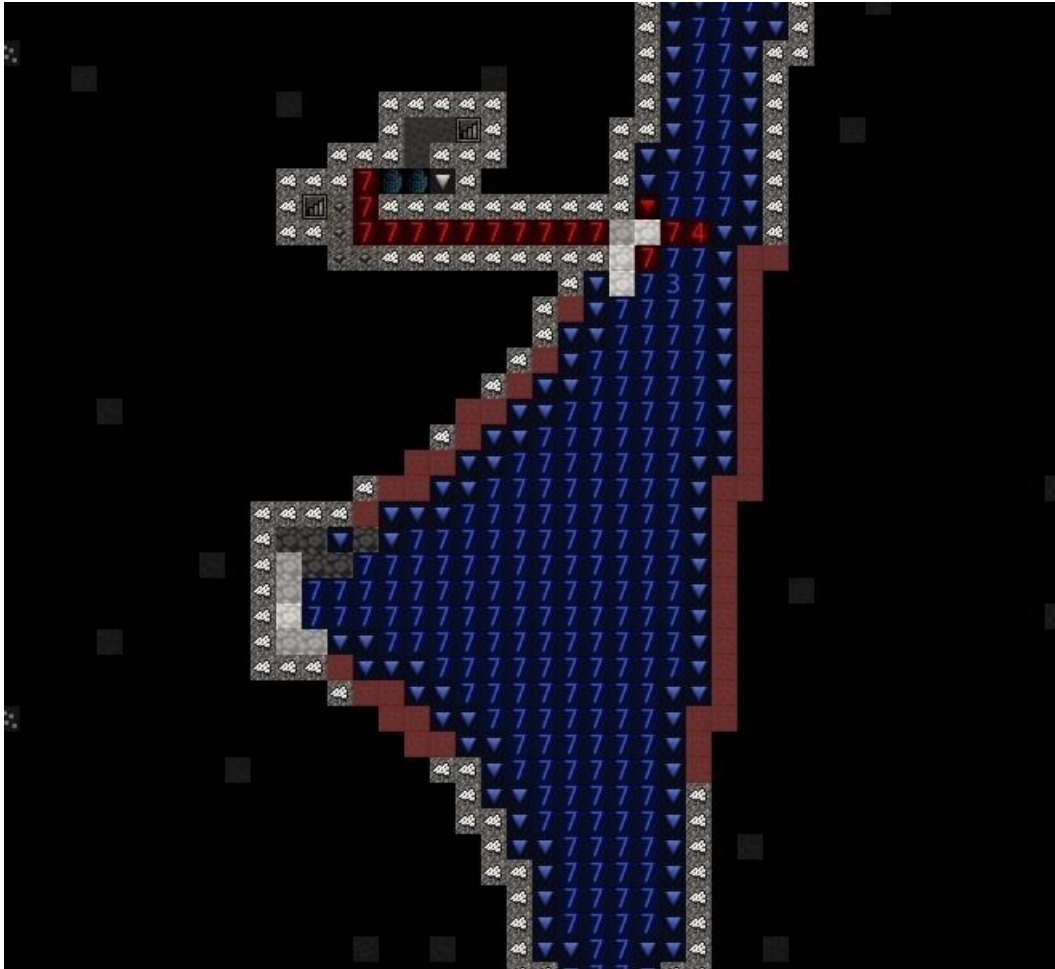
They were thoughts and instructions from just beyond his conscious understanding and a series of events over the last few years had finally made them become clear. The first event had been the death of Moldath, one of the last great warriors of the Mountainous Castles who had survived the invasion of Hell.



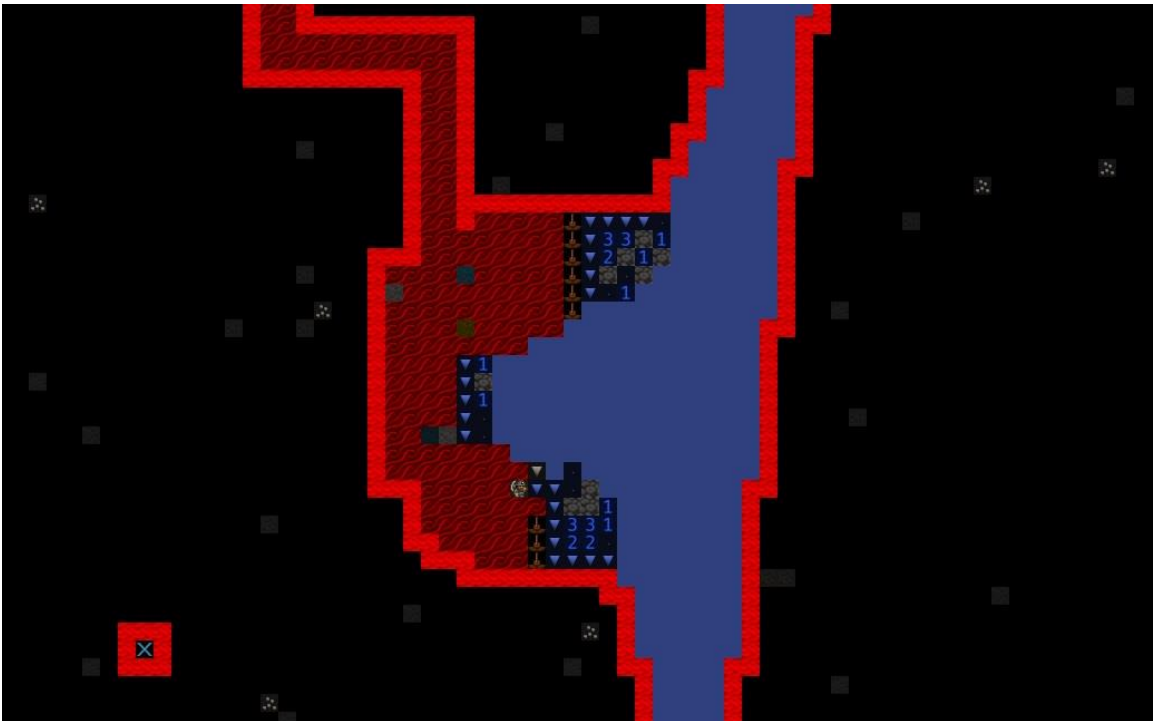
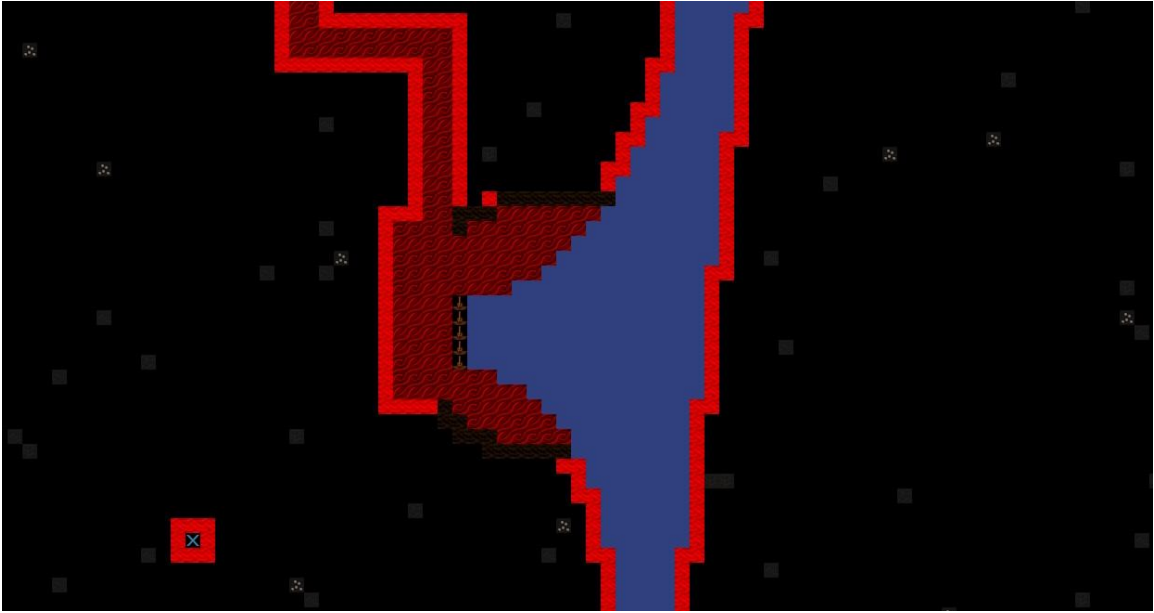
It left Iton, as the last surviving member of that great battle. Iton missed her constant companion greatly, and gone was her bubbly personality after Moldath's death. She rarely spoke to anyone now.

That is when Fath's fragmented thoughts began. They became clearer when the glass tower reached the first river bed. The engineers and miners led by King Zan himself had a difficult task ahead of them as the glass tower was to go through two rivers, a waterfall and a narrow 2 level aquifer. They postulated many solutions on how to dam the rivers, but in the end the king simply concluded to pour magma strategically on both and mine out the stone where needed.





The aquifer was a more difficult challenge. They began to dig down into it from above letting the water pour into the river basin and flow downstream, then pour magma around the edge to seal the water within the stone.

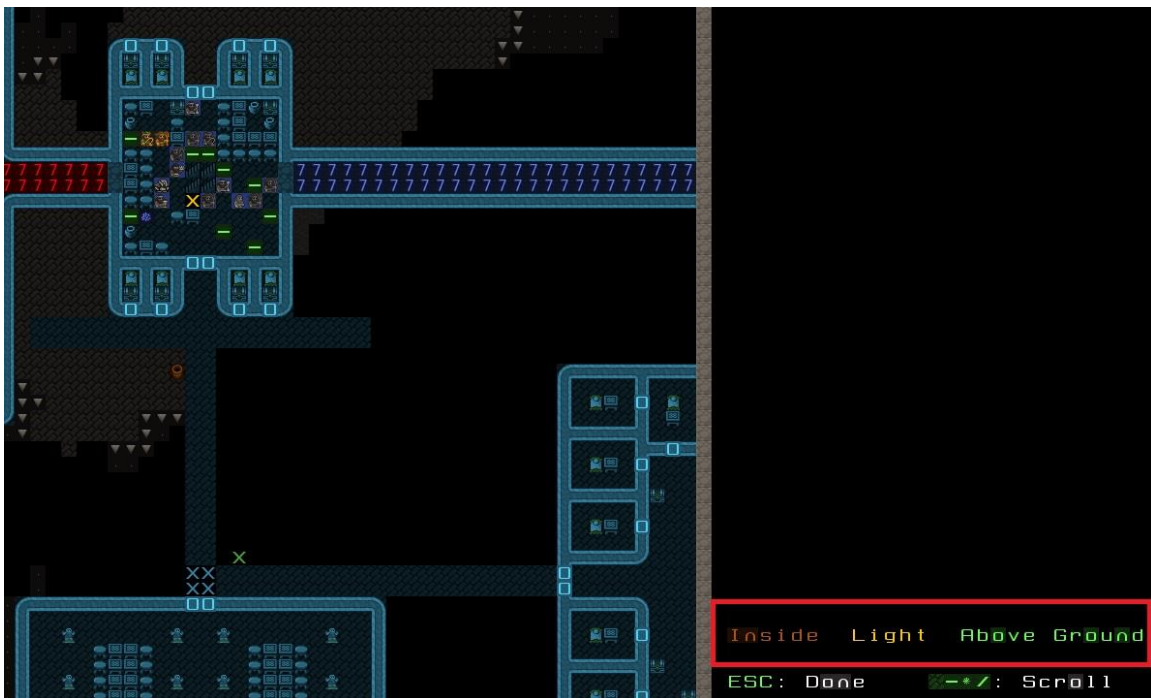


They repeated this for the 2nd level until the river bed was completely dry. But still the voices inside Fath were unintelligible.

The king then set to channelling out the river bed and replacing it with glass.



It was then that the first rays of sunlight blazed through the immense glass spire and reached the slade floors of Hell.

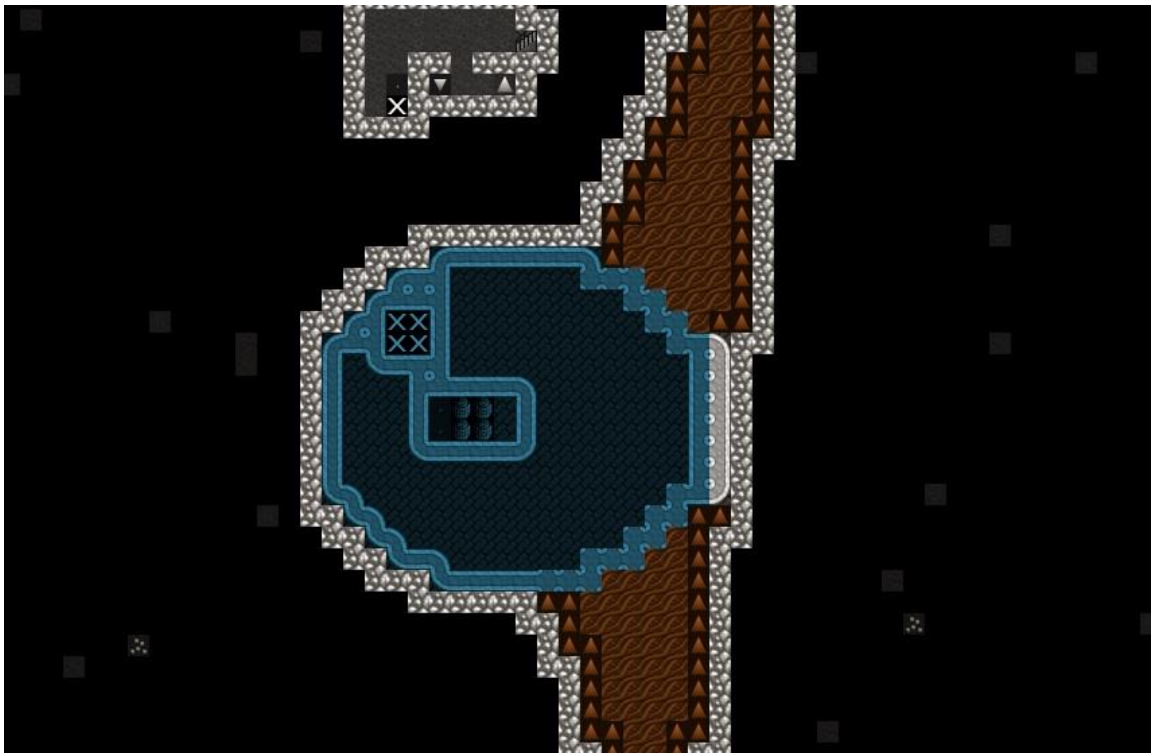


Fath felt as though he had been struck and he could hear the ground tremble with electric vibration as though an alien heartbeat stirred to life within the ground. When he looked around no one else seemed to be experiencing it, but he was sure it was real, somehow perhaps beyond their senses. He could see the eerie glowing pits pulse with hidden energies and at last he heard the voice speak a word to him in a low growled whisper,

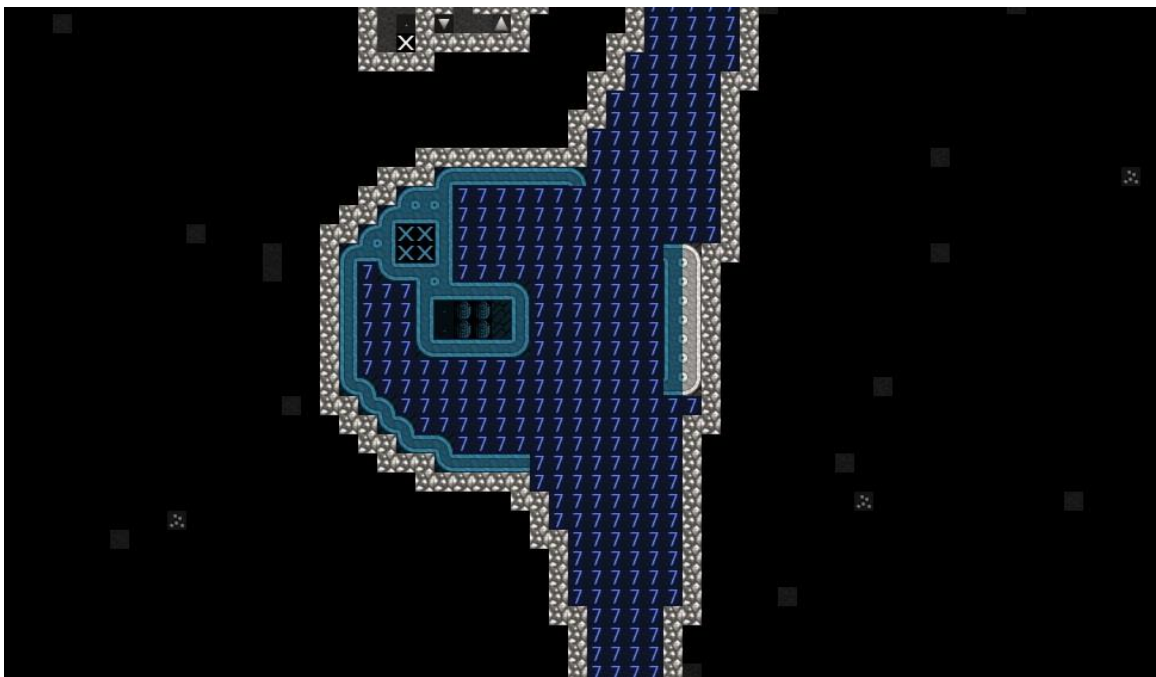
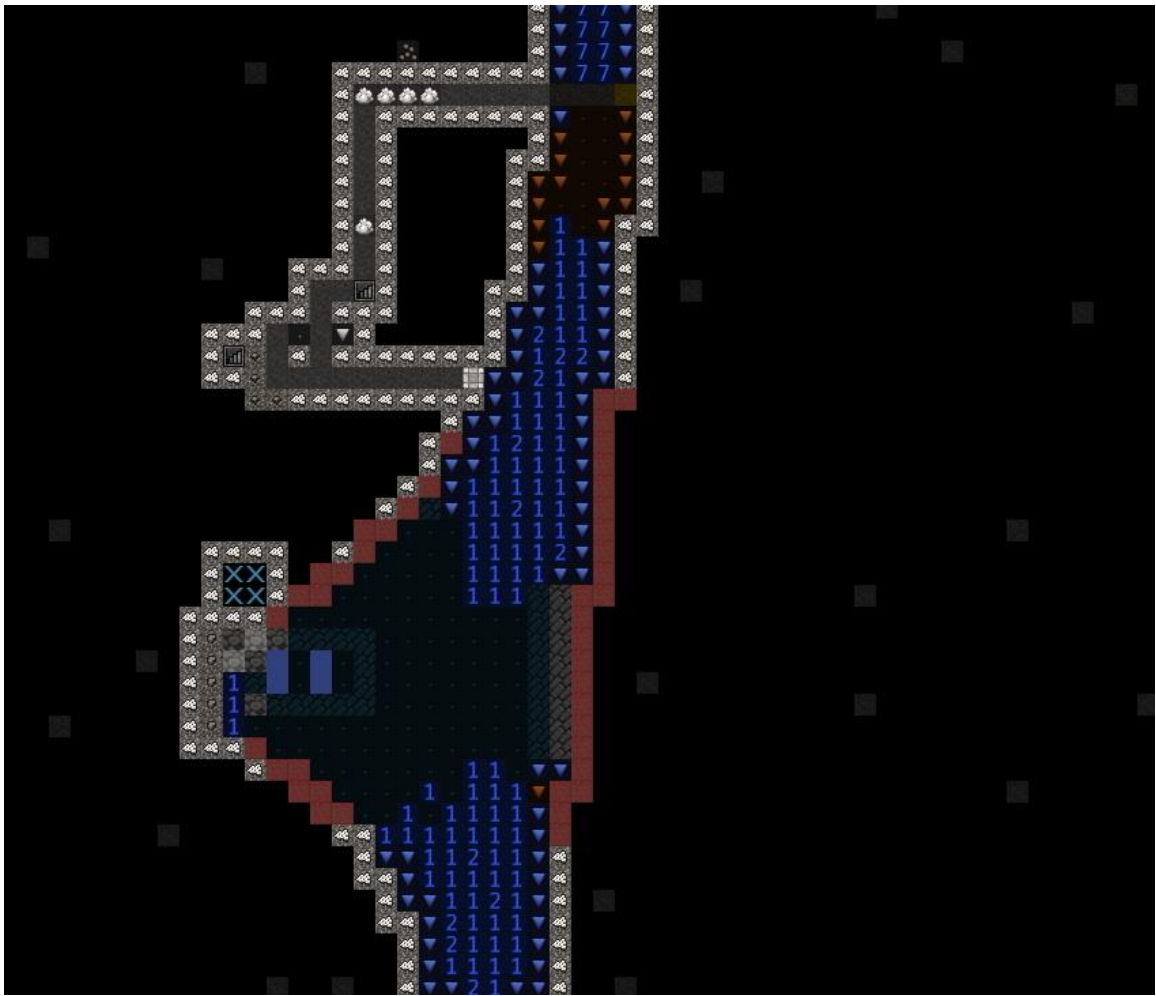
"Armok". Fath felt himself fill with importance. Finally, he felt he was special, for he knew something that no one else did and it rang like bell that's sound was clear for miles but contained as a singular constant thought within his head.

Fath knew what was to be done. A grand temple to one God, his God, the God of his blood. And when his God came to him, Fath would be ready to serve and control of Archcrystal would be his, and his alone.

Zan the king had been aware of Fath's divine devotion for many years, however it gave him no pause. He was an industrious king and there was work to be done. He and his engineers replaced the stone river bed with dwarven glass.



Once completed he gave the command for the first dam to be broken and let the river flow again through the tower and on its way downriver, just in time for the heavy rains that began to refill the empty river.



He then instructed honey bees to be brought down to hell as they could finally survive in the sunlit portions of hell.



At last, he could slate his thirst for mead and honey. The others nicknamed the insect, "demon bees", half-joking that they were breeding something that would slaughter them all.

Fath had fevered dreams full of reckoning and obscure reference. He could see and reach for something just beyond his sight and grasp, but never obtain. He knew the fight for Archcrystal would soon begin, its intricacies stretching towards their finality and his ambition burning with white hot certainty. The glory would be his and the rest be damned - even if the glory was fleeting he didn't care. They were either all damned or the only pious few below a world of damnation who were cursed to never witness the evidence of miracles that could peirce the underworld with order and industry. Such were the dwarves of Archcrystal now, he thought. Blessed crusaders of architectural marvel and thieves of holy design. They would take what only gods were meant for and make it theirs as the ghosts of their ancestors watched through translucent tombs, for at last Fath understood the meaning of Armok - the one God was themselves. They, as a whole, were the great God they had been waiting for that awoke in a sunlit hell. To design the world as they see it, grow tired of its novelty, and then abandon it to mediocrity or oblivion or both. They would not falter for only they could decide its fate, and design it's inspired and glorious structures fueled by a divinity without limit. But Fath knew he had to unite the dwarves under his holy banner and only then would he achieve the power that he sought: a puritan

force of godly dwarves that started with Archcrystal and spread across the world to shape and control the immense design of things.

27th of Opal Year 446
374th Year of Archcrystal
Martial Law of the Mind

King Zan felt he was a people's king, despite his penchant for locking up growing numbers of the general populace for longer periods of time for not meeting his mandates quick enough.



The duchess Etur, and the mayor Ast were a part of his royal court who were convinced of this as well, and on any given day there were 5 or 6 dwarves in jail for various "crimes against production" as they called them. They were seemingly oblivious to Fath's growing cult of religious zealots who worshipped the artifacts of old. Fath would pick one at random on any given week to worship.

Axemosses

FPS: 100 (50) Seleberol • Axemosses • a collector bone bin • All
This is a forgotten beast bone right gauntlet. All craftsman's work is of the highest quality. It is studded with brass and encircled with bands of forgotten beast bone and brass. This object menaces with spikes of kadliate and kenai plant fibers. On the item is an image of elephant seals in blue peafowl leather. On the item is an image of Asno Stealpattern, the goblin and Taxfire the Flicker of Silver, is striking a menacing pose. The artwork relates to the tearing out of the goblin Asno Stealpattern's right cheek by the dragon Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in the early summer of 3 during The Rampage of the dragon Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in Tormaidweller. On the item is an image of Utes Spryseduced the goblin and Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in brass. Taxfire the Flicker of Silver is striking down Utes Spryseduced. The artwork relates to the killing of the goblin Utes Spryseduced by the dragon Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in Tormaidweller in the jungle of Druling in the early summer of 3 during The Rampage of the dragon Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in Tormaidweller.

The Tepid Bastion

FPS: 100 (50) Seleberol • The Tepid Bastion • a collector bone bin • All
This is a rutherford bone bin. All craftsman's work is of the highest quality. It is encircled with bands of round slate cabochons, radiant cut wax opals and oval sphalerite cabochons. This object menaces with spikes of rutherford bone, alder, tin and pig-tail fiber. On the item is an image of The Clam of Sprays, the forgotten beast and Eral Craftedbridges the Courageous Rose the dwarf in alder. Eral Craftedbridges the Courageous Rose is shooting The Clam of Sprays. The artwork relates to the shooting of the forgotten beast The Clam of Sprays by the dwarf Eral Craftedbridges the Courageous Rose with a copper ball from a adamantite crossbow in Archcrystal in the late autumn of 146 during The Rampage of the forgotten beast The Clam of Sprays in Archcrystal.

The Depth of Fancying

FPS: 100 (50) Seleberol • The Depth of Fancying • a collector bone bin • All
This is a pterosaur brute bone left gauntlet. All craftsman's work is of the highest quality. It is decorated with peach wood and encircled with bands of rectangular native gold cabochons, pine and round emerald cabochons. This object menaces with spikes of pterosaur brute bone and cave spider silk. On the item is an image of Tekkud Pricewhip the dwarf and leopards in black bronze. Tekkud Pricewhip is surrounded by the leopards. On the item is an image of dwarves in bandfire opals. The dwarves are traveling. The artwork relates to the foundation of Archcrystal by The Crazy Coal of The Dipped Spears in the early spring of 72. The artwork relates to the foundation of Archcrystal by The Crazy Coal of The Dipped Spears in the early spring of 72.

Flusheddeath the Oracular Targets

PS: 100 (50)

This is a raw adamantine ring. All crafted dwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with round microcline cabochons and decorated with blind cave bear leather, cashew wood and rufouser bone. This object is adorned with hanging rings of cave spider silk.

On the item is an image of dwarves in raw adamantine. The dwarves are travelling. The artwork relates to the foundation of Cloisterstandards by The Trades of Esteeming of The Dipped Spears in 55. The artwork relates to the position of king of The Dipped Spears in the late spring of 77.

On the item is an image of the Sandaled Chill the cashew wood figurine of Usbu Nutsscburge in bronze.

On the item is an image of Song Gutsdooom the goblin and Taxfire the Flicker of Silver. The dragon in bandfire opal. Taxfire the Flicker of Silver is striking down Song Gutsdooom. The artwork relates to the killing of the goblin Song Gutsdooom by the dragon Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in Tormentdwellier in The Jungle of Drying in the early summer of 5 during The Rampage of the dragon Taxfire the Flicker of Silver in Tormentdwellier.

On the item is an image of Tekkud Pricewhip the dwarf and pearl millet plants in blind cave bear leather. Tekkud Pricewhip is surrounded by the pearl millet plants.

King Zan thought that since he worked with the miners they respected him, clearing out the large areas needed for the tree farm and the underground reservoir needed to irrigate it.



It was a difficult engineering project requiring controlled cave-ins of 4 stories of vast spaces that were mined out around the glass tower.





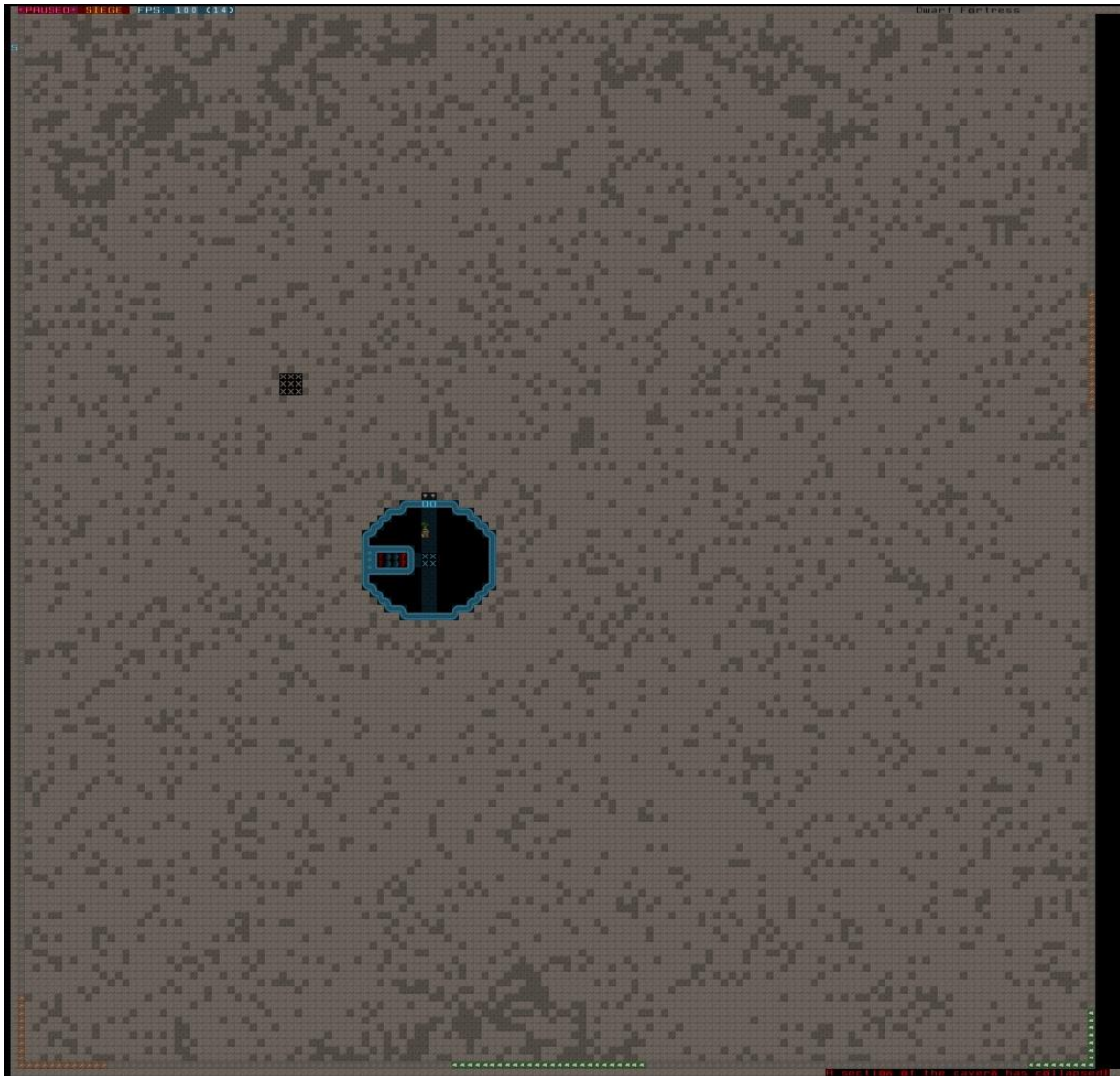




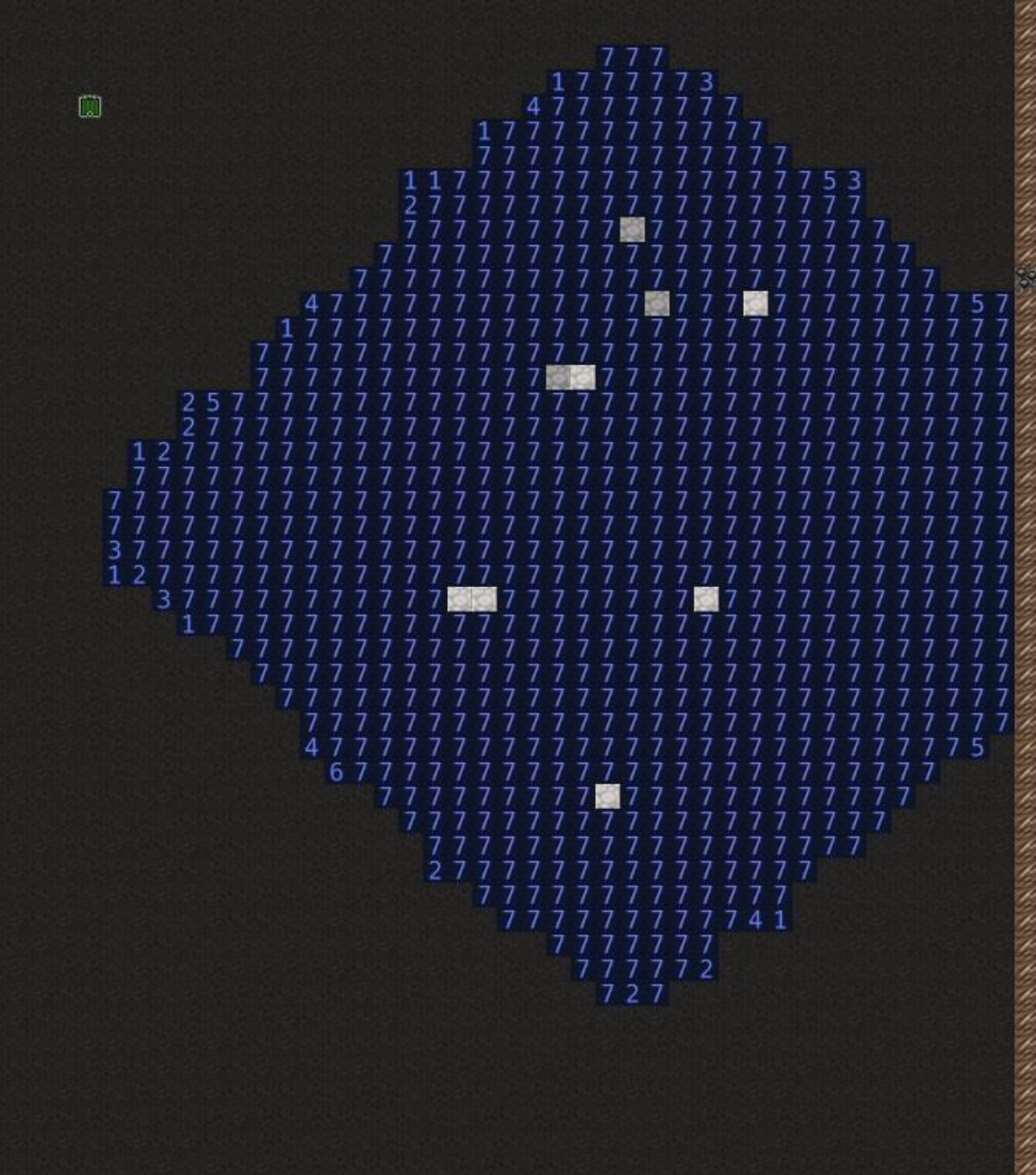
They also had to rebuild a strip mined area below with stone blocks to ensure the collapse didn't extend farther than what they wanted.

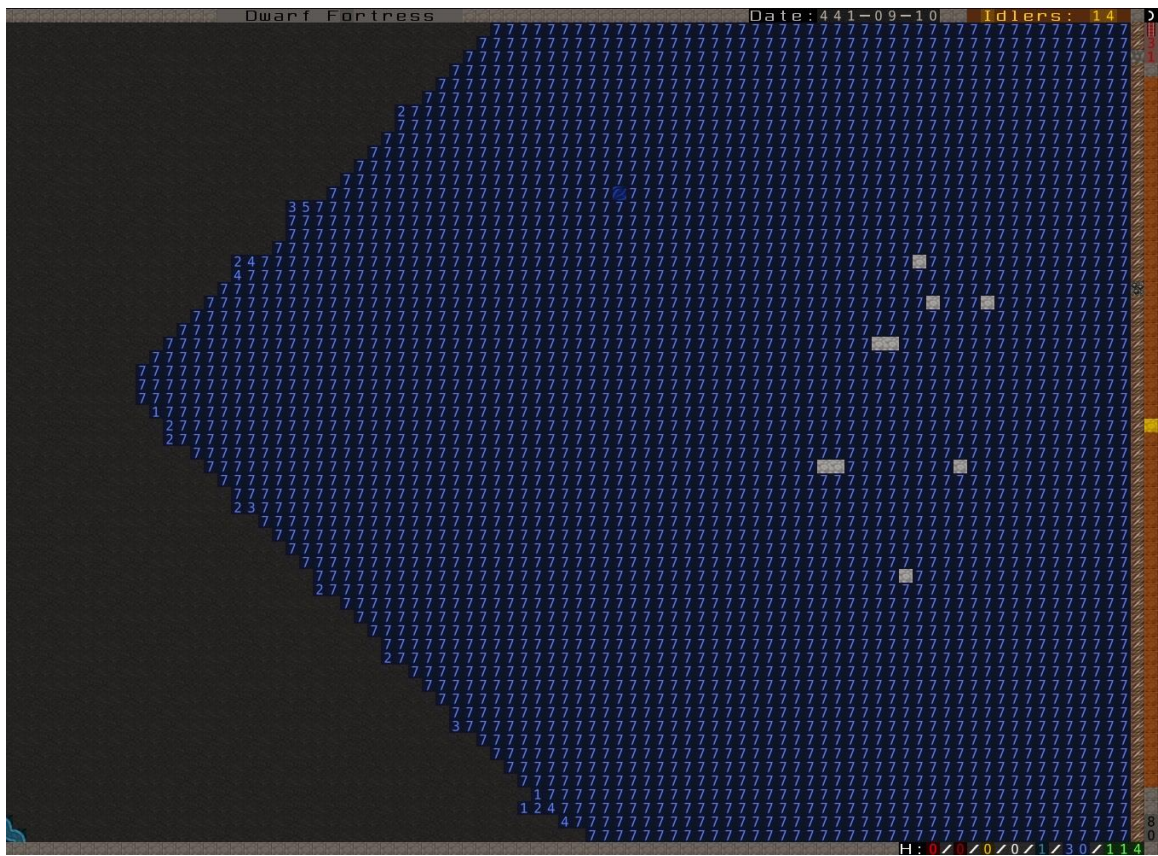


It was an enormous undertaking spanning years of effort that was finally ready. The switch was pulled and the cave collapsed.



After the dust cleared, the hatches were opened and water from the six floor reservoir rushed into the artificial cavern flooding in and irrigating the ground.





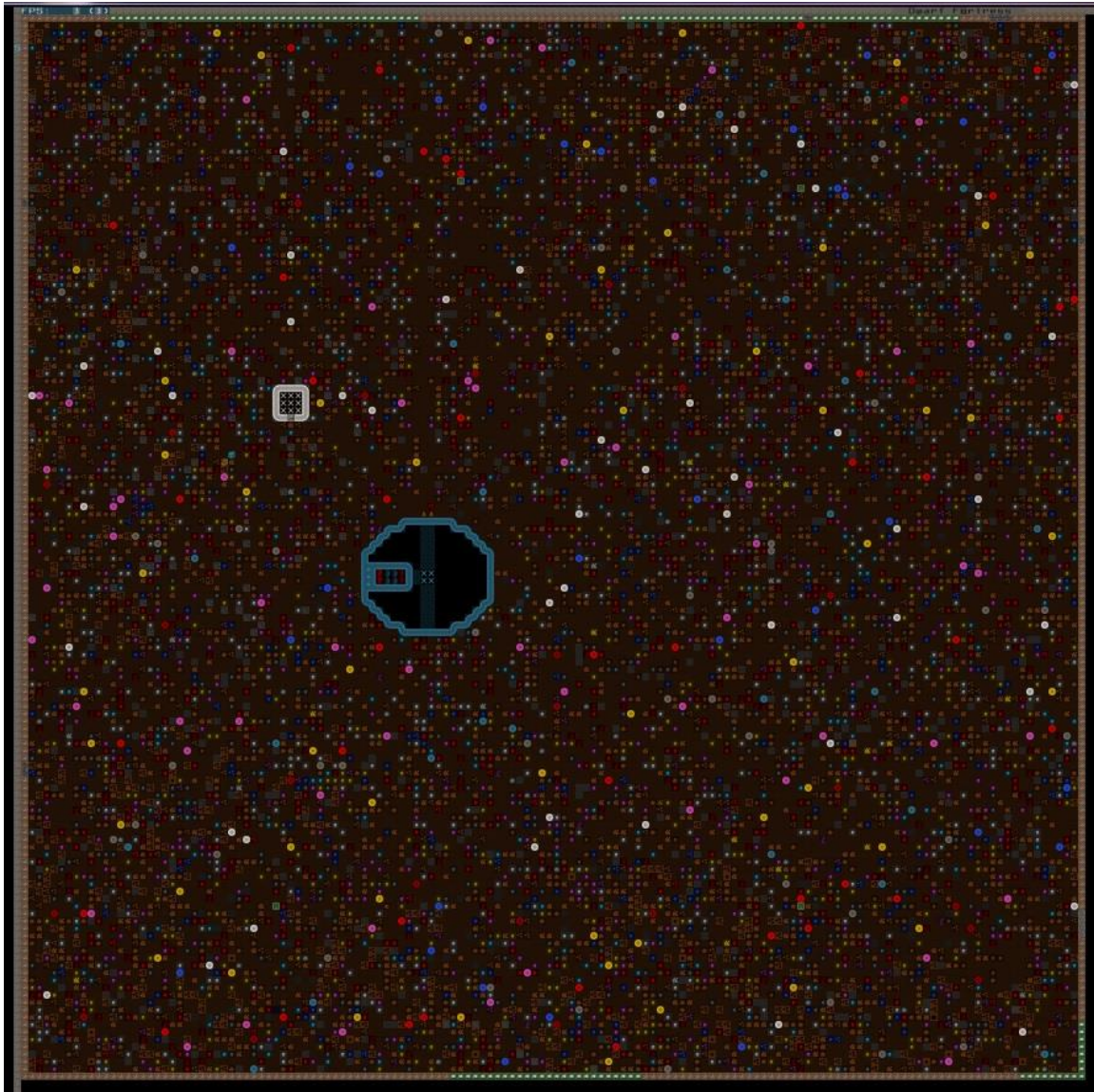




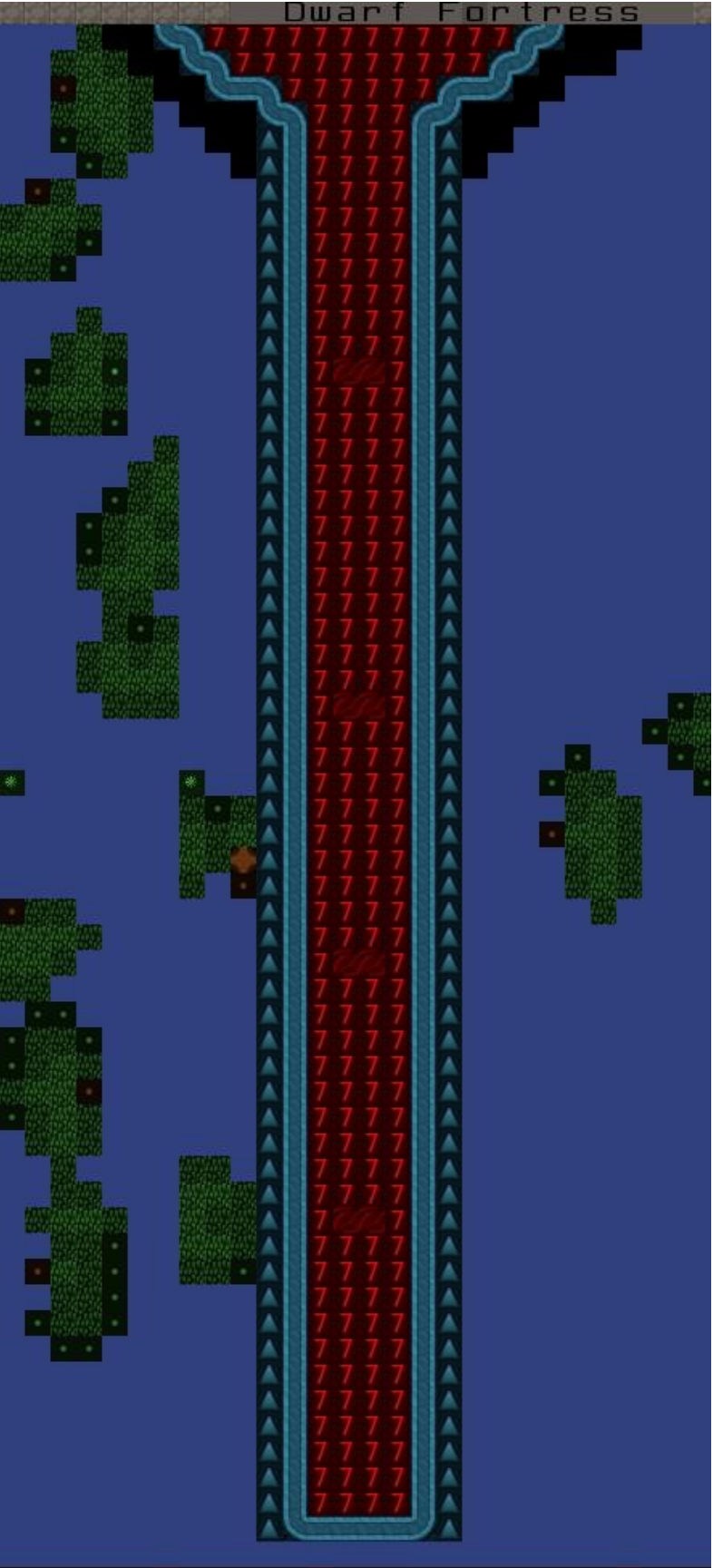




At last the dwarves of Archcrystal could clear cut a forest that was not beset by horrible clouds up above.



Etur the duchess was also very fond of elaborate traps, so she constructed a magma reservoir above the long glass entrance to the tower for any foolish enough assault the fortress - which still surprisingly happened at least once a year.



And above it the glass tower continued to rise.



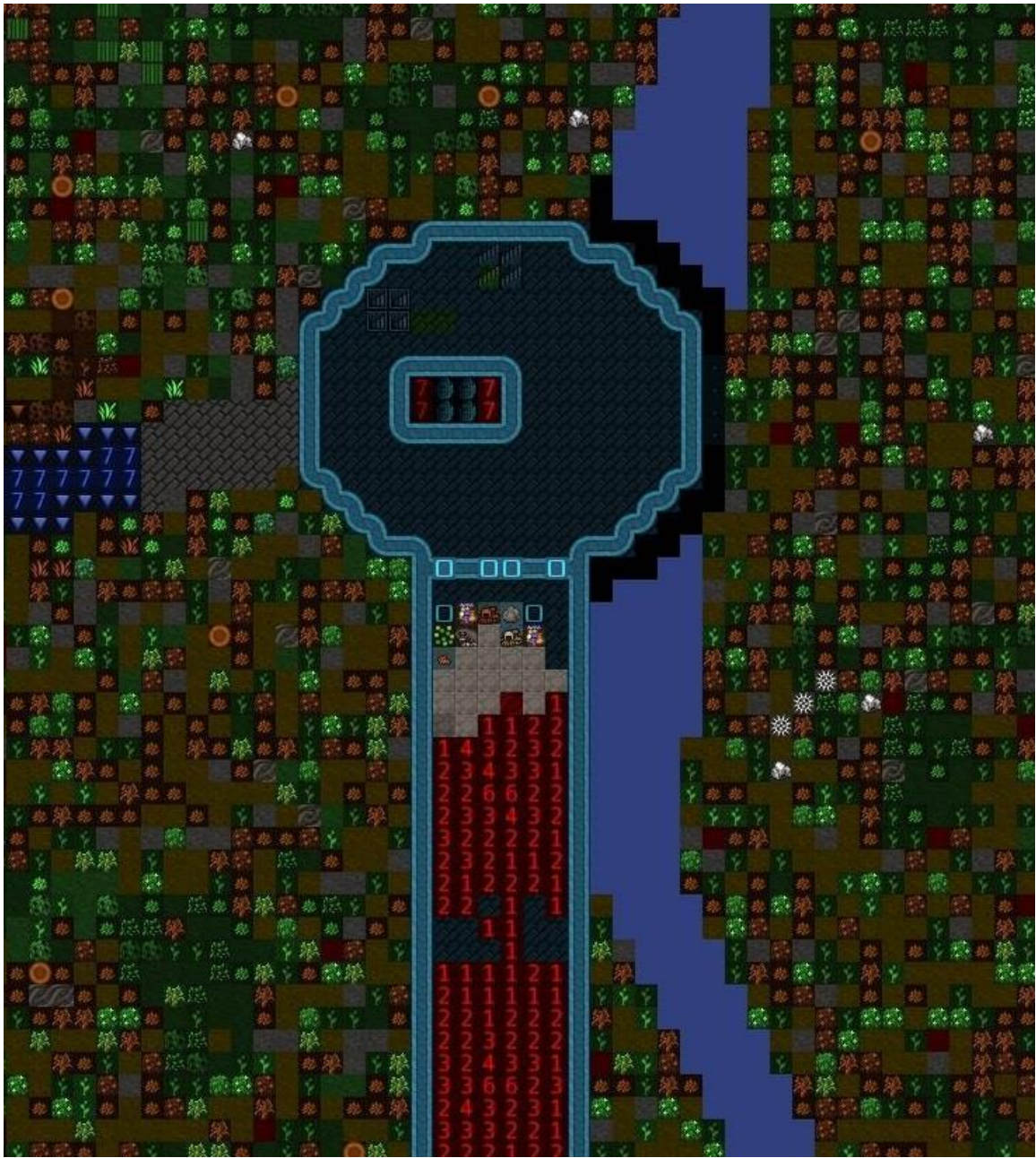
Archcrystal was equally close to 4 heavily populated goblin cities and therefore invaded frequently by all of them.

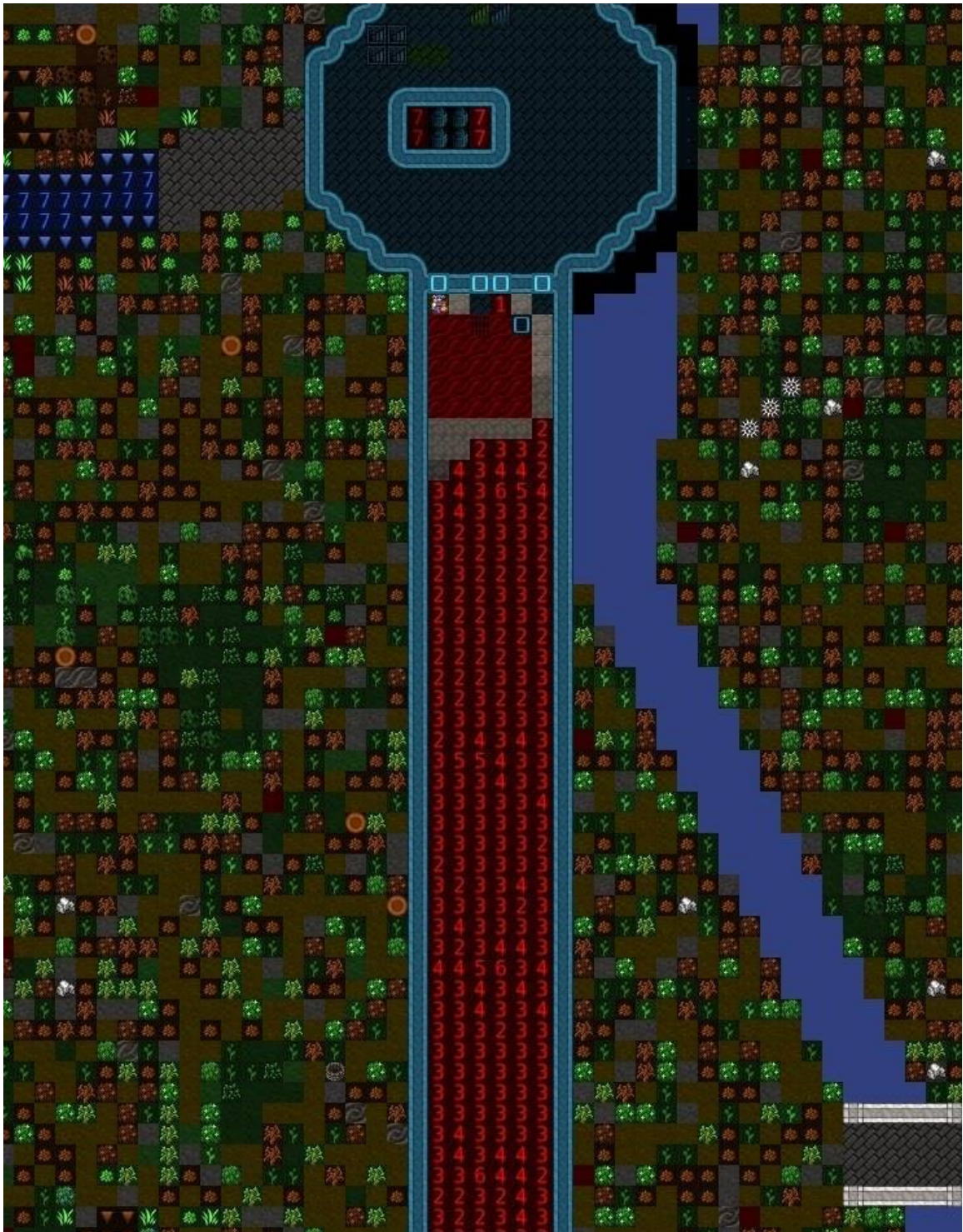
The elves also assaulted Archcrystal once every few years in retribution for destroying the jungle, evil though it was. And always the following year their caravan would arrive wanting to trade as if nothing untoward had happened. When questioned about the raids, their diplomat would always reply that the attacking elves were a rogue off-shoot - "insurgent elves" as he called them, not officially aligned with the Elf Queen Lesana. So

when the time came to test the magma trap at the entrance, somehow it coincided with the visit of the elvish caravan.



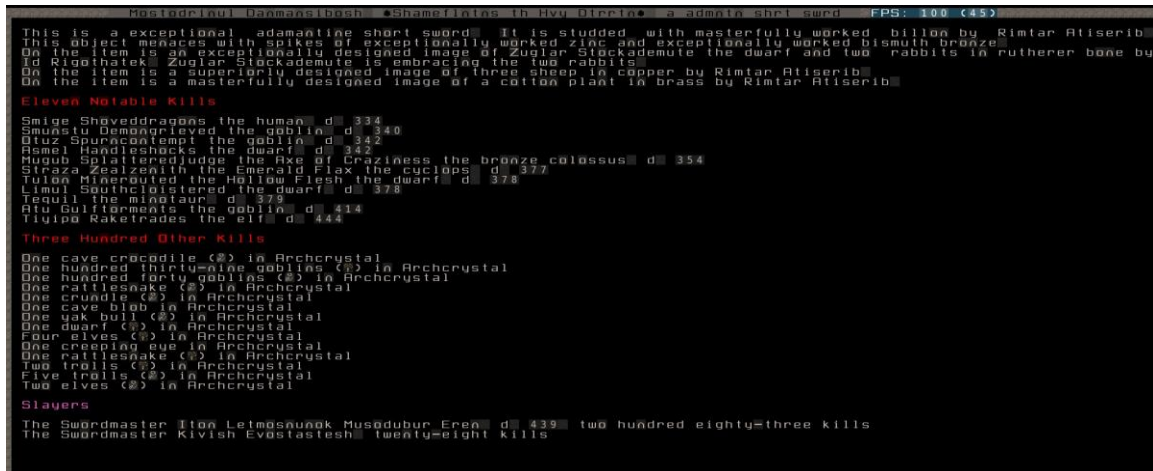






Their screams carried well through the glass walls, but the dwarves insisted they could not hear them. The elvish diplomat looked on with horror as the last elf was pinned up against the locked glass door clawing with futile desperation against it. The outpost liaison looked at the elvish diplomat and shrugged, "Insurgent Magma."

On a sadder note Iton died at the age of 170, the last of the soldiers to invade Hell. Moldath and Iton were buried side by side in clear glass tombs decorated with countless stories of their heroic battles. Her blade “ShamefulIntense the Heavy Deterioration” passed to Kivish who already showed great skill with it.



Many of the weapons have been passed on now between 2 and even 5 generations. Fath regarded these with reverence as well and he incorporated their legacy into his “Paths to Divinity” sermons which he gave regularly.

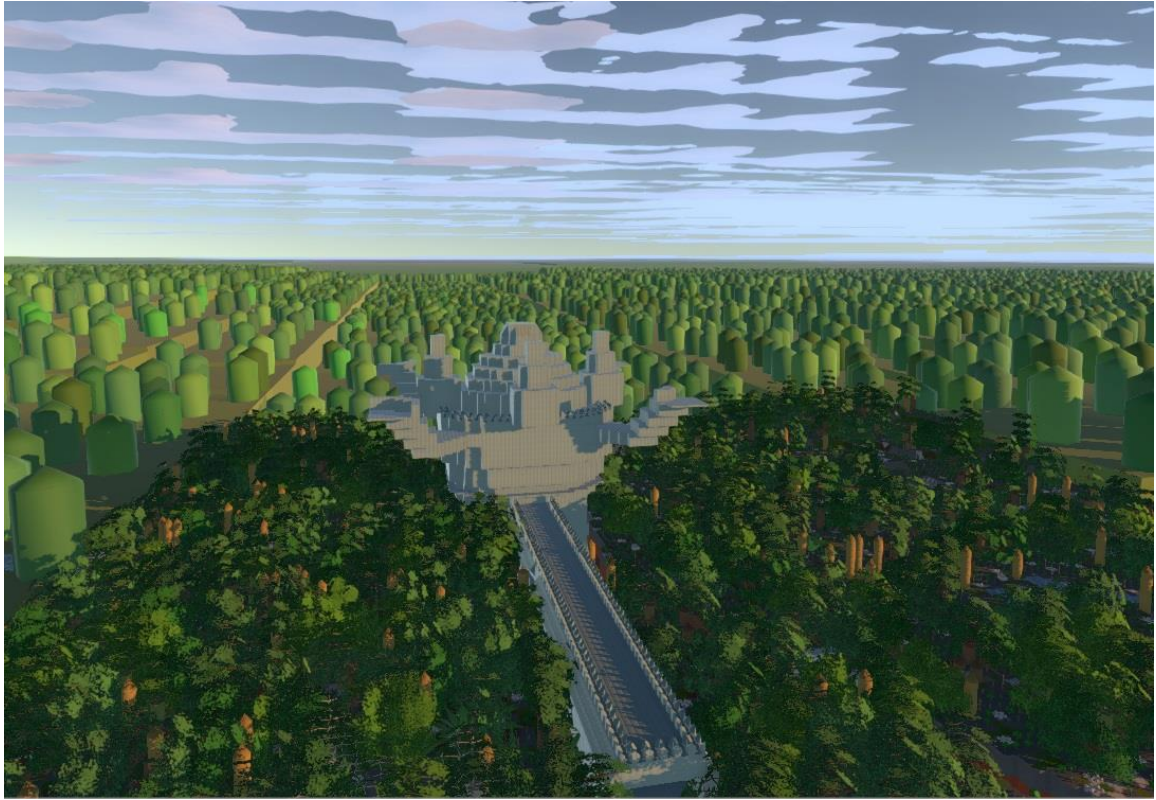
But for a moment Fath sat alone in his opulent room designed by crafts-dwarves centuries ago with pictures of glory and sacrifice in every known available resource. He would regularly attempt to commune with them but was constantly disappointed. They did not seem to share his efforts for communication. He was like a child in the throws of a tantrum, railing against what he saw was their disrespect towards him for not confirming his own beliefs. In his heart of hearts he knew they listened to him and if there was no response then it was their choice not to answer him which made his blood boil under the surface of his normalized exterior, practiced to appear calm and serene. But to Fath, anything could be rationalized and explained, and he forced himself to believe that he could hear the things that he wanted hear through a desperation and a longing for significance which provoked him to control destiny - or at least attempt to. He had a keen self awareness that the history of the world before him was very brief and that he could shape the story of his world for thousands of generations to come if he could only act with a lasting and permanent conviction. His was an absolute belief punctured with hidden doubts.

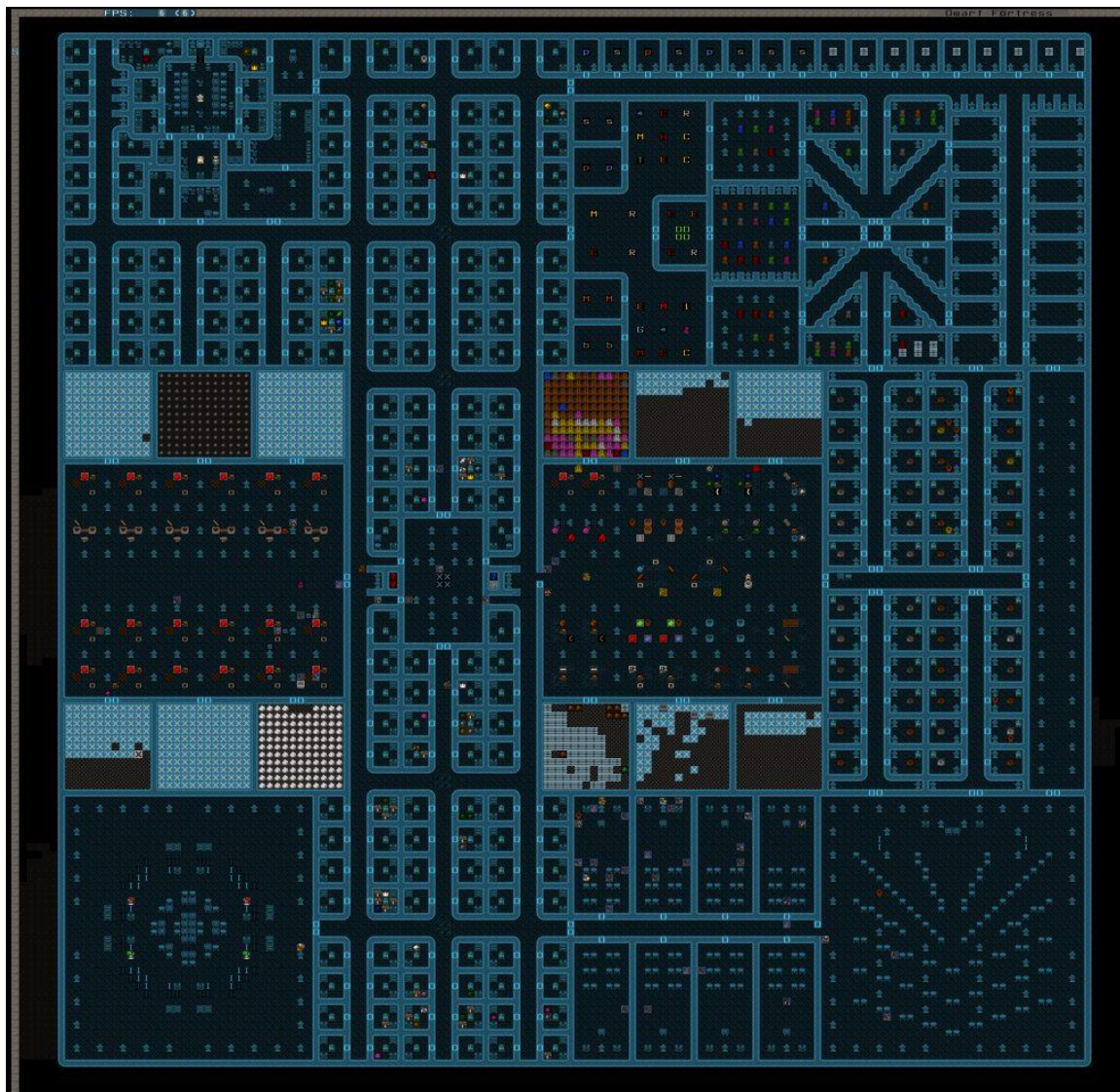
*19th of Galena Year 473
401st Year of Archcrystal
Journal of Mayor Ast Brassknobs*

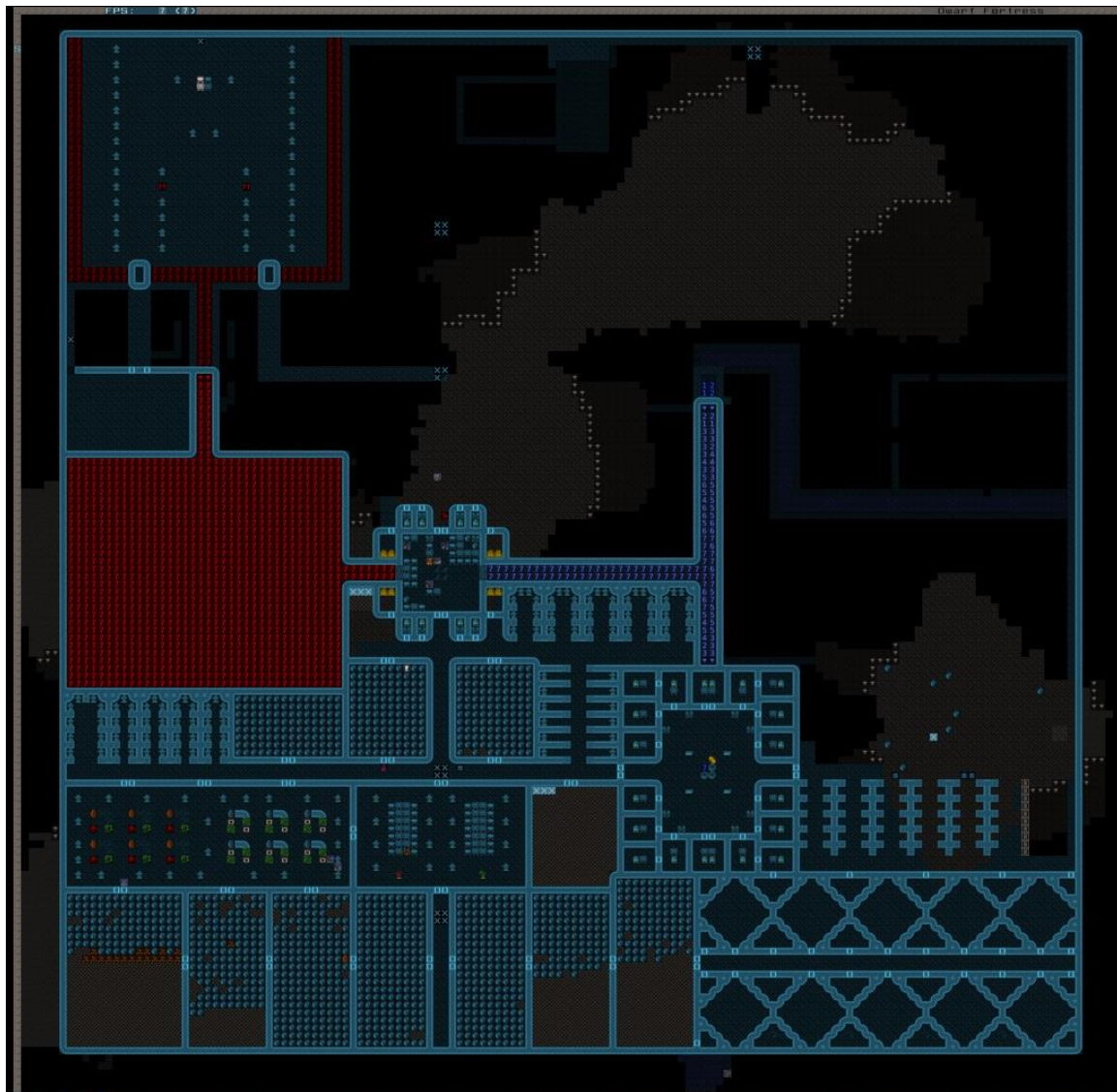
I am starting to witness a true marvel of creation as the tower of glass rises out of the foul jungle. It is an immense structure and I am starting to revere the “insane” foresight of The

Mad Queen Libash and her brother Ushrir Dikeguards as neither of them lived long enough to truly see their creation come to pass.





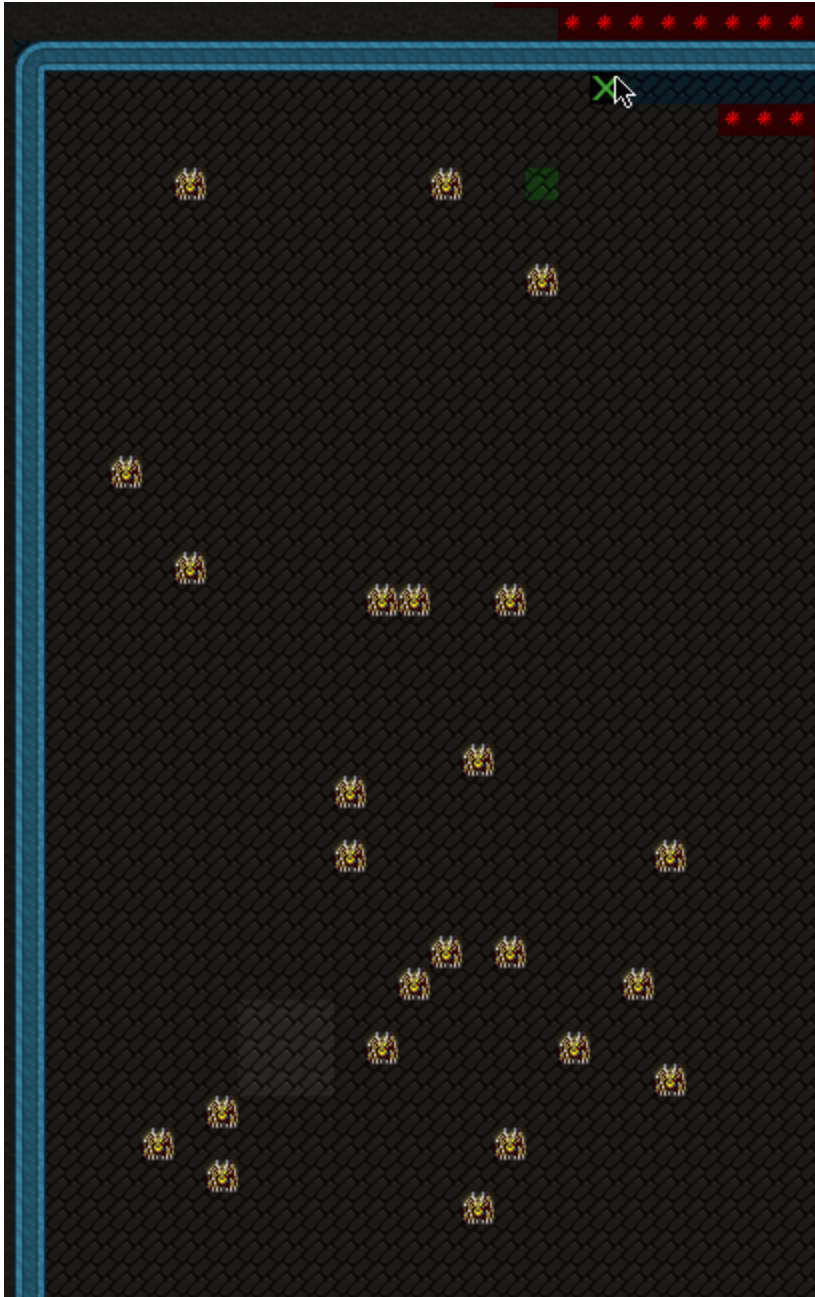




But we are having a few minor problems as some of the wooden furniture and finished goods have started to disintegrate after 400 years of use. A well in the hospital was unusable after the bucket basically turned to splinters.



The following day, I spotted Id walking the length of the grand halls below the fort. Out of something of a morbid curiosity, I tailed her for a time. I think she was aware of me, but said nothing. As she stepped into the slade cavern below, I could see her briefly tense up, before inspecting our cave dragons.



"Rare you see them at this size ... You guys have been here awhile I take it?"

Startled, I responded, "Just short of 375 years to the day."

She stopped dead in her tracks, and stared at me. She blinked. "Do you have a library?"

I nodded, and led her to the The Inky Bowels, a center of knowledge and learning. Erush was sitting at one of the tables, pondering the meaning of stars or some other nonsense like that. He completely ignored us for a moment.

“Where are the books?”

“Books?”

“I’m sorry, madam, but we don’t have of these books you speak of ...”

“How do you record things then? You know, history and such?”

“With the occasionally stone tablet, but they’re too bulky to use for anything beyond basic organization ...”

Id pinched the bridge of her nose, and for a moment, I thought she was going to lash before letting out an exasperated sigh. “Come with me, I’m going to give you the best gift I can ...”. Leading us to the main haul, she grabbed a bunch of pigtails, and began to ground them on a quern before adding water.



I watched her take the slurry, and begin pounding it into a paste with a screw paste, watching carefully to make sure that she extracted all the water out of the slurry, and then spread the rolls on a nearby crafts ship. As they hung, she asked me where I could find some coal or possibly charcoal. Something black.

Curious on what she was making, I located a lump lying near the original smelters, and handed it to her. Taking out a dagger, she grounded the coal into a black powder with the hilt, and poured it into a goblet, and retrieved a roc feather from our stocks. At the base, she cut it, and then dipped it in the coal slurry.

“Let’s see if I did this right.”

With a practiced hand, she began to write on the dried pig tail slurry, created recognizable letters and characters. “Good, now pay attention, this is how you’ll preserve yourself and everything you were.”, and motioned for us to return to the library. Sitting at a desk, she began to write. Erush walked over and watched in amazement.

“So this is called paper?”

“Yeah, something I learned in a place very far away”

On the quire (which is what she called the stack of papers), Id wrote out a detailed list of instructions detailing the creation of paper via a pig tail slurry, as well as two additional methods on creating parchment with a substance known as quicklime, and a method involving specific types of papyrus plants.

Additionally, she listed designs for a new type of item she called a bookcase, methods of binding the quires in longer lasting codexes.

“That should cover most of it ... I think, now to bind this properly into an actual book.”

And with that, the first codex of Archcrystal came into existence, which became later known as the “Librum Primum”. Over the next several days, many of the scholars began committing their thoughts to paper. Id spoke very little, and simply wandered as a ghost in the library.

A week later, I spotted Id filling her backpack with supplies, and refilling her waterskins.

“Leaving already?”

“Yeah ... I’m not needed ...”

“Needed?”

Id shrugged, “Just a thing I need to do. Rarely do I find places so close the void filled with life.”

“The void?”

“Don’t worry about it. Not your problem. It was nice to stay somewhere with actual company for once, and the glass is beautiful. I don’t see much of it in my travels ...”

“... You know, you’re welcome to stay if you want. It’s within my power to grant residency here at Archcrystal, and I’m convinced the king could grant you citizenship for your knowledge alone?”

I actually got a small grin out of her, “What, me? Knowledge? I’m just a marksdwarf who learned a bit in her travels. I might remember a bit of siege operations though ...”

I actually glared at her, “One who has possibly revolutionized the sharing and storage of knowledge. You’re as much a marksdwarf as I’m the king!”

She shrugged, and continued to load supplies. That wasn't enough to stop me, "Where are you from, where are you going?"

That got her attention, "Ast, I've walked the infinite planes for far longer than you realize. There are SOME things you are simply better off not knowing. My home was destroyed in a fit of madness and depravity long ago. I'm all that remains."

I tried to respond, but no words came to me.

"Use what I taught you. Preserve your knowledge for future generations, and let it spread throughout the world. Everything ends, Ast, everything. Even this place will eventually. It may not be for years to come, but it will. Let the legacy of Archcrystal, its history, its stories, its knowledge live on."

Id holstered her backpack.

"I'll leave in the morning. One final drink and a nice bed to rest in before I continue on."

Unable to think of anything to say, I followed Id to the tavern. She didn't say much aside from a minor disappointment for not having fisher berry wine in the stocks.

The following morning, I walked with her up the flight of stairs leading to the jungle. "Is there nothing I can say to convince you to stay?"

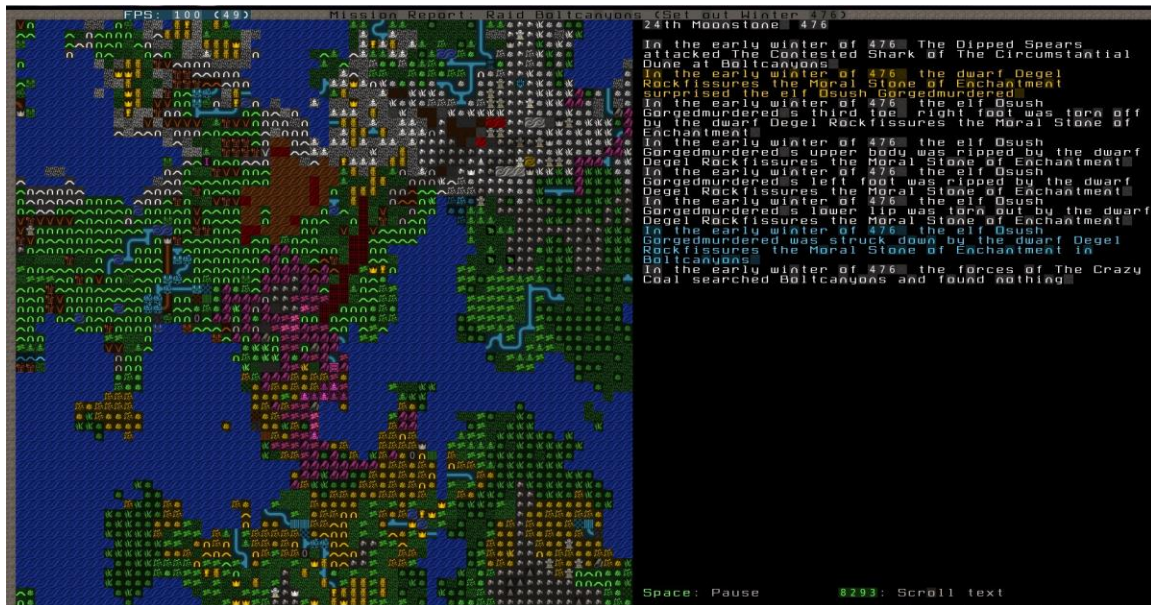
"No, but perhaps, just perhaps we may meet again, Ast. May the world itself protect this place."

I thought I should say something, or perhaps stop her, but in the end, I simply watched her walk into the distance and disappear between the trees ...

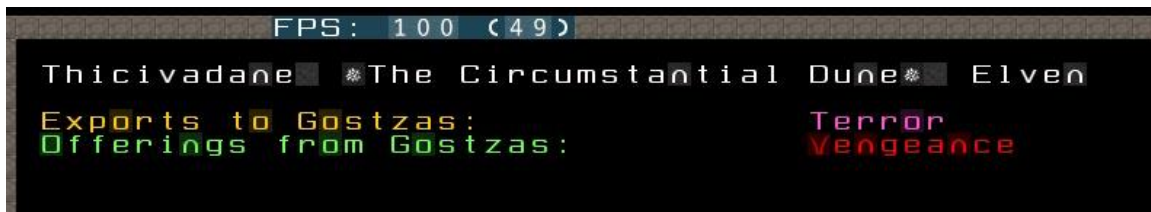
5th of Hematite Year 477
405th Year of Archcrystal
The Elven War

For years the elves of The Circumstantial Dune had raided Archcrystal and lied that the raiders were outsiders, criminals, or insurgents. At last Zan the King of The Dipped Spears had enough of their insolence. In 476 he commanded the Scaly Clasps to raid the elven retreat of Boltcanyons to the north east and teach the fools a lesson.

When they arrived the dwarves were unlike anything the simple tree folk had ever seen – fully armoured from head to toe in adamantine that had been forged in hell and decorated for hundreds of years. Their weapons blazed and dazzled in sunlight. The elves gathered around them like moths to flame. With a nod from his commander, Degel Rockfissures the Moral Stone of Enchantment seized the first elven noble he spotted and threw him to the ground. When he was sure he had everyone's attention he executed the elf amid the gasps and cries of elven villagers. The dwarves of Archcrystal left without a word.



Queen Lesana of the elves was quick to declare war in her anger and gathered her armies.



In the summer of 477, the elven hordes descended on Archcrystal making their way expertly through the dense jungle. King Zan had expected a retaliation but this was no raiding party of a few dozen elves. The scouts spotted them pouring over the eastern ridge, their numbers too great to hide even in the thick jungle.

The alarm was sounded, and The Mountainous Castles and The Scaly Clasps took their positions at the north end of the glass entrance tunnel. Two reserve squads were activated as well, The Granite Touches and The Last Palisades, and sent to the front line. The elves with their war animals brazenly marched straight into the tunnel, and at halfway, the dwarves and elves charged each other.



The dwarven line of adamantine and steel met the elven line of wood and cloth with devastating effect and the first dozen elves were quickly cut down. Giant tigers and cheetahs leaped across their corpses crashing into the dwarven wall of metal attempting to push back the line with their weight as more elves and animals pressed from behind them. The dwarven weapons were ruthlessly efficient, hacking and slashing through animal and elf alike as the reserve squads began to join the fray. And still the enemy

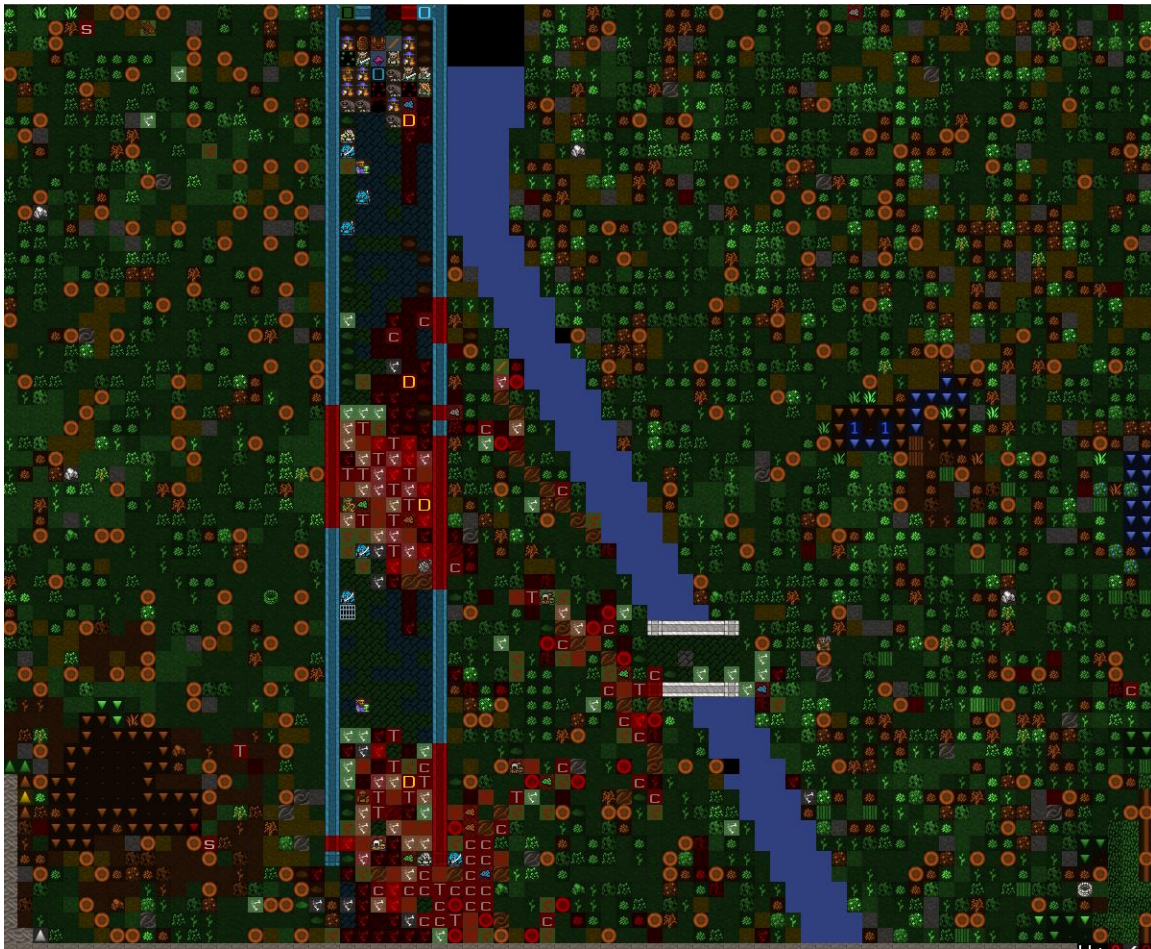
flowed like a river over the eastern ridge and into the tunnel. At the center of the line stood the champion of Archcrystal, Kivish Sectcudgel the Portal of Universes wielding Iton's old sword Shamefulintense the Heavy Deterioration, slicing through enemies like a cold machine of death. The front line became a wall of piled corpses with either side having to climb over bodies and wade through severed limbs to reach their targets – and so far it was all one-sided.

At last the Cave Dragons of War were brought up to the entrance by their trainers and they charged the mounds of dead that nearly reached the ceiling of the 3 story tunnel, crashing through with their immense 400 years of size. They sent limbs and bodies flying through the air as they burst through the front line and into the terrified elvish army which was now too committed to turn around and flee. The dragons gleefully flung screaming elves from their mouths to splatter against the glass walls of the tunnel that were now stained red for almost the entire length and height. The sun shining into it gave it an eerie reddish glow, making the dwarves who resided in hell feel at home.

And still the enemy came relentlessly, the horrified elves at the front wishing to flee the carnage were being pushed from behind by the funneling mass of elvish arrogance. Blood began to pool on the flat surface of the glass tunnel, ankle deep now making the dwarves fight in a swamp of massacred fools. At last a dwarf fell, having advanced to far into the elves he got surrounded and passed out from exhaustion. An elf ripped his helmet off and finally the enemy had a victory over one of the defenders. But by now it was too late, the last squads of the invaders began to notice the odd elf fleeing in terror into the jungle, and eventually they saw the carnage inside that was near the entrance now. It didn't take long before the rout was on. The Cave Dragons enthusiastically chased many of them into the jungle, batting them to the side like insects or eating them whole.



The tired, but victorious dwarves of Archcrystal collected the body of their fallen comrade and slowly made their way back inside. They counted the dead – almost 900 elves and 500 war animals. The bodies would take months to dispose of. Hours later a dwarven caravan came to trade and they made their way to the depot without remorse or surprise.



*8th of Granite Year 484
412th Year of Archcrystal
After the Elven War*

Fath's mind sloped into recess, imprisoned by thoughts and insights into mind and body. He had sought out the secrets of life and death and was rewarded when the Scaly Clasps retrieved a book from the tower: Victory by Doom.

PG: 100 (50) Victory By Doom Victory By Doom a cow horn-bound codex
This is a cow horn-bound codex. The written portion consists of a 74-page guide entitled Victory By Doom, authored by Ves Scouredfondled. It concerns the secrets of life and death. The writing is reasonably serious. Overall, the prose is amateurish at best.

He committed its text to memory. The secrets contained within the book were greater than he could have ever imagined and held instructions on how to live forever along with other dark powers he swore he would never use. But now that he could be immortal, he could also make plans far into the future without worrying about running out of time. However, as so often with certainty and ambition his views began to change. He lamented his desire for control of Archcrystal as the friends and family he knew passed away from old age. He saw a longer picture of time now, one that he wasn't certain that he could shape. Fath fell into despair within his secret library at the bottom of Hell unsure of his former path to destiny. He had been certain that the fight for Archcrystal would be

his primary goal forever, but as forever loomed in his conscious thoughts he began to see it as futile. So he became reclusive in his texts, waiting for inspiration as the world around him plunged onward. He stopped giving sermons and recruiting others to his cause. Given an eternity to complete anything made nothing worthwhile. So he looked inward, trying to make sense of nonsensical desires, and he refused to share this burden with anyone, hiding the book of secrets from anyone else because he judged that the reasons for immortality were crushed by infinite time. And worse, this reasoning seemed adolescent to him, persisted by the thought that anyone in his position had reasoned this as well and reached the same conclusions - what he thought was the purpose of his life became vague and superfluous.

But as with all depressions, the answer was plain to all but him, had he been able to witness himself from only a few years hence.

It was the eleven war of 477 that renewed his convictions, and even now he would say it was an odd recollection. As the battle waged he perched himself above in the glass tower watching the fight and pondering its importance. He was sure the dwarves would be victorious given the tactics and weaponry. His feelings of futility suddenly became trivial in the face of the dwarven warriors fighting for their lives - as well as the elves screaming in terror and crying for their mothers to save them as they were pressed into the dwarven wall of death.

Fath saw the gift that immortality was. He saw the commitment to a longer goal that eludes even those blessed with a long life. He saw the opportunity to plan the plan of forever which very few had the insight to consider. But most of all, he saw the work, and the chance that was afforded him to complete it that very few had. He smiled wryly as he recognized finally what Doren had been trying to teach him: to be an absolute effective ruler by design, he must be the leader who ruled forever, the immense design of things. To die meant to give control and trust. Otherwise, you are the immense design - of someone else.

With renewed purpose, Fath descended to his dwarven family with a reconditioned commitment to guiding them into forever, no matter what that forever meant. His was now a certainty that spanned uncertainty and zeal. And there was nothing more dangerous to the world than this.

Now when he started his sermons he recognized that the believers were not those to be converted forever, but to be used in the here and now, a recognition he longer regretted. To use his fellow dwarves was no longer a meager selfishness, but a realization that they served his lengthened efforts. And it was strengthened by the fact that they could not hold the immensity of design which he now held. Being above them was not a truth he would admit, and it held no attachment to his heritage or birth rite. It was simply a product of his own desires that would fail examination to anyone but him - forged by his ambition that withstood the assaults of eternity and reason. This reason would not last in the face of rational argument, but it did not matter to one who could outlast all of his opponents. It was they, not him, who would slip back into the immense design of things - along with everyone else until he was alone with perfection and, most of all, divinity.

27th of Moonstone Year 493
421st Year of Archcrystal
The World Crusades

War had come to Archcrystal from all corners of the world. Goblins and elves were a constant nuisance, and finally the humans of The Confederacy of Finding decided to try their luck at throwing themselves against the glass spire. Their diplomat said the excuse for declaring war was a caravan that had gone missing under suspicious circumstances. King Zan knew as well as the law-giver that the traders had been caught in a cloud of wicked soot – such was the risk of trading in the haunted jungle.

The humans sent many raids to Archcrystal, but all were thwarted especially by the wielder of Indigospark, Limul Citymystery the Oily Love of Covers, who whispered a prayer to the mountain God Onul DiamondBeak before each engagement:

"Lord O'er the mountain Lend us your strength
 Steel our resolve fortify our courage Guide our hand against your enemies
 Grant us the courage of our forefathers Let none stand against us
 For Onol! For Archcrystal!"

The battles were brief and the humans routed easily, but this left the dwarves of The Dipped Spears with no allies left in the world. But rather than despair this turn of political isolation, King Zan reasoned that it was inevitable – the treasures of Archcrystal now were too great for any civilization to ignore.

Mountainhome Gostzas • Archcrystal • FPS: 40 (18)			
Animals Kitchen Stone Stocks Health Justice			
x: Additional options (DFHack)			
Created Wealth:	205771380	Population:	126
Weapons:	12679042	Miners	4
Armor and Garb:	29104733	Woodworkers	2
Furniture:	23600361	Stoneworkers	1
Other Objects:	47464039	Rangers	7
Architecture:	19689299	Metalsmiths	10
Displayed:	54659367	Jewelers	1
Held/Worn:	18574539	Craftsdwarves	11
Imported Wealth:	108309	Nobles/Admins	19
Exported Wealth:	10237938	Peasants	9
Food Stores:	13400	Dwarven Children	None
Meat	36	Fishery Workers	30
Fish	None	Farmers	None
Plant	1495	Engineers	25
Seeds	1896	Trained Animals	54
Drink	3633	Other Animals	None
Other	6340		
		Axedwarves	None
		Axe Lords	5
		Swordsdwarves	1
		Swordmasters	12
		Macedwarves	1
		Mace Lords	1
		Hammerdwarves	None
		Hammer Lords	None
		Speardwarves	None
		Spearmasters	4
		Marksdwarves	1
		Elite Mkstdwrvs	4
		Wrestlers	1
		Elite Wrestlers	None
		Recruit/Others	None

Let any beast or army come to our lands and be shown that their last arrogance will be abated by their last breath, he thought. And to solidify this threat, the king sent messages to every government that could be reached, and he declared war against them all.

FPS: 77 (38)		Civilizations	
Pesor Onec	*The Confederacy of Locks*	Human	
Domongom	*The Feral Doom*	Goblin	
Snodub Ngob	*The Plague of Flickers*	Goblin	
Bokdostngosp	*The Absolute Cruelty*	Goblin	
Cocce Vole	*The Hides of Amazing*	Elven	
Bekarlokum	*The Dipped Spears*	Dwarven	
Dibeshrisen	*The Crazy Coal*	Dwarven	
Ozokatu	*The Exalted Fly*	Goblin	
Icemi Coru	*The Leopard of Tiredness*	Elven	
Thicivadane	*The Circumstantial Dune*	Elven	
Thalenine	*The Contained Wing*	Elven	
Behal Buh	*The Kingdom of Hopper*	Human	
Pesor Pumik	*The Confederacy of Finding*	Human	

The armies of the world had set up permanent siege camps some distance away from the tower in the jungle to launch ever larger raids against the dwarves. This delighted King Zan as they would often turn to fight each other or become choked by the clouds of wicked soot that approached silently upon the camps. Through centuries of hardship the dwarves had earned their natural protection from the haunted land.

Meanwhile, below in hell the dwarven nobility began to have concerns. The current population was old, the baby boom after the invasion of hell had almost run its course. The generation below them also did not want to marry preferring casual romantic relationships, and they saw children as too much effort and it became unfashionable within the circles of the young elite. And so the population of Archcrystal began to slowly dwindle – for every 4 deaths there were only 3 births, as only three married couples remained.

This was also causing an increase in the general stress of the populace. Dwarves sank into depression more easily, their decadence failing to give them meaning and they searched for an outlet. Some became so disillusioned they threw tantrums causing fist fights or committed vandalism even in the temples. The luxuries of fine meals, drink, and expensive furniture could no longer satisfy them as their threshold for happiness clawed ahead of material extravagances.

→Mosus Melbilegen Scholar is stumbling around obliviously!

The fortress guard were busy administering beatings for petty crimes - some lethal. The mayor was also busy consoling the troubled and trying to maintain order. For now the situation was manageable, but dissent was slowly growing. King Zan decided to begin a public works program hoping that a common goal of labour would re-unite them. He commissioned a large covered road to be built around the perimeter of the tower.



The public reason for this would be to protect any future caravans from the horrible clouds that drifted through, but the private reason was that it would funnel any invading force through the road and into the main glass tunnel of the fortress, giving the defending dwarves cover from the sunlight. However, if this did not improve the mood and loyalty of the citizens of Archcrystal, the king had another plan - he would institute a forced marriage decree, imprisoning couples in their rooms until they agreed to wed. It was something their forefathers had done centuries ago to ensure the survival of Bomrek's pure bloodline, and it could be done again.

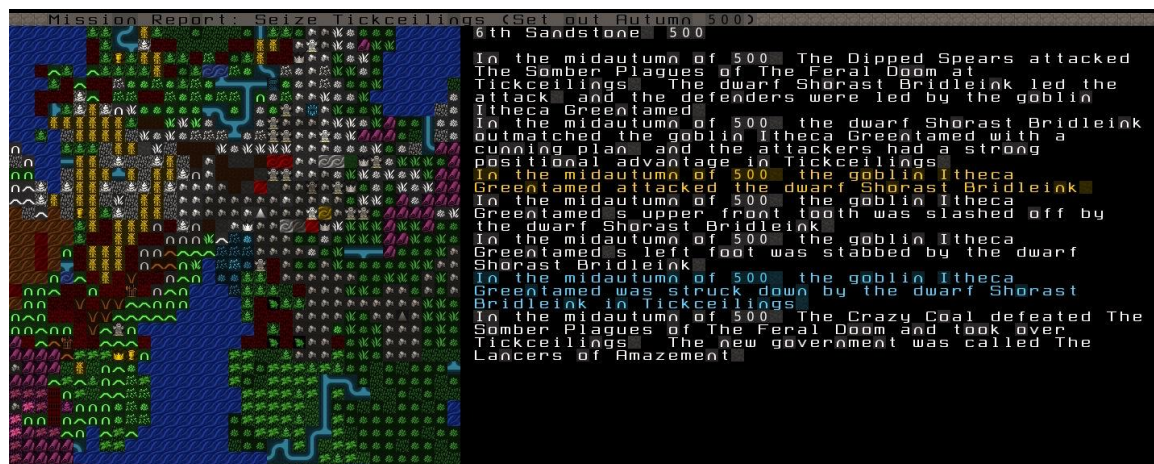
The armies that camped nearby sat beside their evening cooking fires as their leaders planned different ways to take the tower and conquer its vertical empire that stretched from heaven to hell. The soldiers could see the glass spire rising in the distance even at night for it glowed red from the pits in hell which reflected through the ascending glass - not to mention the blood that now stained the entrance from the countless fallen invaders. Their leaders did not have to look upon it, so they could not see crimson light that pulsed rhythmically through the glass beacon of doom that called the armies of the world to it like insects to a horrible fire. And that flame within its impenetrable glass heart beat relentlessly through a dark moonless sky. The soldiers would shudder, because more than anything else in the world, this unforgiving tower was the real reason that they now feared the night.

21st of Felsite Year 502
430th Year of Archcrystal
Order and Industry

It was migrant day at Archcrystal - and they descended down the into the fortress for the first time in over 4 centuries.

Stinthad marched down the immense glass staircase of the tower, marveling at the structure along with the other refugees that she followed. She had heard King Zan's proclamation that the crystal spire was accepting new comers, although briefly, and came to see for herself how the capital had flourished and withstood their infinite enemies. She had listened intently as the messenger to her refugee camp had described the king's "Final Offensive" against all the enemies of the dwarves calling on all who were willing to fight to come to the tower to, at last, strike back against the civilizations of the world who would dare attack the eternal fortress.

The first attacks against the goblins of the Feral Doom came swiftly and conquered the northern pits, catching the enemy off guard and unprepared. The battles were fierce and short with the dwarven attackers being far better equipped and trained thoroughly by skilled commanders within the tower. Most of the defenders surrendered quickly and the rest were publicly executed in front of their former strongholds.



Mission Report: Seize Wereseear (Set out Winter 500)
3rd Opal 500

In the midwinter of 500 The Dipped Spears attacked The Undignified Hex of The Feral Doom at Wereseear. The dwarf Udil Heatherbook led the attack and the defenders were led by the goblin Ade Hollowrasped. In the midwinter of 500 the dwarf Udil Heatherbook tactical planning was superior to the goblin Ade Hollowrasped's but the defenders had a slight positional advantage in Wereseear.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Cebela Westspark attacked the dwarf Erush Paddlehush.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Cebela Westspark's right eye was stabbed out by the dwarf Erush Paddlehush.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Cebela Westspark was struck down by the dwarf Erush Paddlehush in Wereseear.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Ade Hollowrasped attacked the dwarf Kumil Manorcraft.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Ade Hollowrasped was struck down by the dwarf Kumil Manorcraft in Wereseear.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Mothdast Hoarysmear confronted the dwarf Zan Heatmirrored.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Mothdast Hoarysmear's right upper arm was ripped by the dwarf Zan Heatmirrored.

In the midwinter of 500 the goblin Mothdast Hoarysmear was struck down by the dwarf Zan Heatmirrored in Wereseear.

In the midwinter of 500 The Golden Outrage led by the dwarf Udil Heatherbook clashed with four goblins in Wereseear slaying them.

In the midwinter of 500 The Crazy Coal defeated The Undignified Hex of The Feral Doom and took over Wereseear. The new government was called The Secretive Handie.

The pits of Witchwrath, a half day's travel to the north, has been conquered and incorporated into your holdings.

Mission Report: Seize Witchwrath (Set out Spring 501)
11th Slate 501

In the midspring of 501 The Dipped Spears attacked The Curse of Flesh of The Feral Doom at Witchwrath. The dwarf Bim Pagedslipped led the attack and the defenders were led by the goblin Gulo Handlesling. In the midspring of 501 the dwarf Bim Pagedslipped outmatched the goblin Gulo Handlesling with a cunning plan and the attackers had a strong positional advantage in Witchwrath.

In the midspring of 501 The Tame Keys led by the dwarf Bim Pagedslipped clashed with ten goblins in Witchwrath slaying them.

In the midspring of 501 the goblin Gulo Handlesling attacked the dwarf Ingish Tradeshoots.

In the midspring of 501 the goblin Gulo Handlesling was struck down by the dwarf Ingish Tradeshoots in Witchwrath.

In the midspring of 501 the goblin Ome Quicktars attacked the dwarf Mafol Alluplanks.

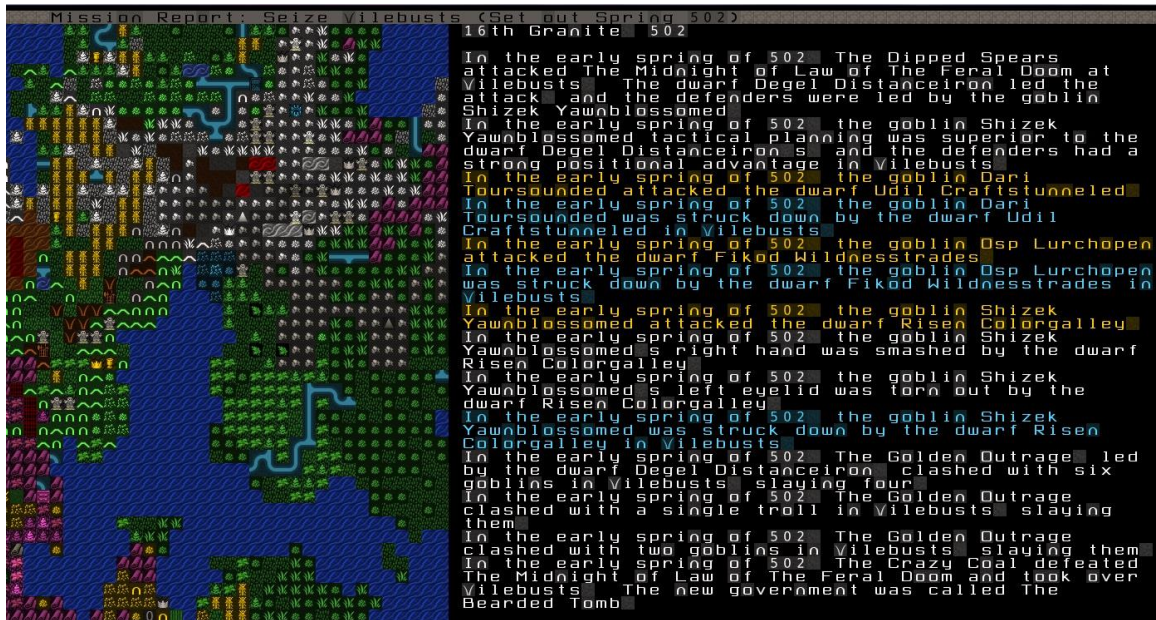
In the midspring of 501 the goblin Ome Quicktars was struck down by the dwarf Mafol Alluplanks in Witchwrath.

In the midspring of 501 the goblin Usan Sickneessbronzee confronted the dwarf Dodok Craftsfigures.

In the midspring of 501 the goblin Usan Sickneessbronzee was struck down by the dwarf Dodok Craftsfigures in Witchwrath.

In the midspring of 501 The Crazy Coal defeated The Curse of Flesh of The Feral Doom and took over Witchwrath. The new government was called The Incinerated Citadel.

The pits of Vilebusts, a half day's travel to the northwest, has been conquered and incorporated into your holdings.



The pits of Lambmenace a half day's travel to the north has been conquered and incorporated into your holdings.



Many of the weapons were running out of spaces for recorded kills.

```

FPS: 100 (50)          Kedneth •Fedbalanced• a adamantite battle axe
This is a masterful adamantite battle axe created by Atir Eribesdör.
Forty=Four Notable Kills
Omethu the forgotten beast d 99
Oxut Subtlemaze the Bad Devil the forgotten beast d 101
Tuthid the forgotten beast d 102
Cuthabe the forgotten beast d 103
Corowa the forgotten beast d 103
Rubsit the forgotten beast d 104
Imust Droolsullied the forgotten beast d 105
Omsos Burialechoed the forgotten beast d 106
Furgig Gutsspray the forgotten beast d 107
Edir the Terrible Knots the forgotten beast d 107
Casot the forgotten beast d 108
Ena the Mirror of Fogs the forgotten beast d 109
Skullsdeaths the Sunken Squid of Shadows the forgotten beast d 112
Rco Sealterror the forgotten beast d 112
Lastrik the forgotten beast d 112
Thomo the forgotten beast d 113
Garem the Noble Stunts the forgotten beast d 118
Cugo the forgotten beast d 121
Liyetha Owlveiled the Misty Cloak the forgotten beast d 123
Rsdn the forgotten beast d 125
Niya Fleadcave the forgotten beast d 128
Cithasi the Hidden Mole the forgotten beast d 132
Doto the forgotten beast d 133
Omo the forgotten beast d 135
Mindfultulips the yak bull d 138
Yonali the forgotten beast d 138
Amug Wickednightmares the Cavernous Seduction the forgotten beast d 148
Strappinghunger the yak bull d 461
Are Castlewaved the Massive Root the roc d 464
Justicemuth the Courage of Confidence the giantess d 466
Anbath Rendwinches the goblin d 472
Nako Liebblinds the goblin d 486
Tode Kissattic the human d 491
Snog Declinetresses the human d 491
Rslu Shimmerhour the human d 495
Ricote Autumarelief the elf d 495
Romimi Belgeopens the elf d 497
Ethlith Hollowwater the elf d 497
Atu Spiderumenaces the goblin d 497
Enure Guisestone the elf d 498
Eletha Thorngrottoes the elf d 498
Molu Attacklobsters the human d 499
Utesh Highroot the human d 502
Niri Wintermatches the elf d 502
Three Hundred Forty=Three Other Kills
One cave crocodile (🐊) in Archcrystal
One elk bird (🦌) in Archcrystal
Two trolls (🧔) in Archcrystal
Seventy=six goblins (👹) in Archcrystal
Ninety=three goblins (👹) in Archcrystal
Forty=four elves (🧝) in Archcrystal
Forty=six elves (🧝) in Archcrystal

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The dwarven refugee camps of the Dipped Spears suddenly proclaimed their territory of the land which they inhabited with wooden palisades and high guard towers.

```

The hillocks of Netrush has been founded nearly a day's travel to the northeast and
incorporated into your holdings.
Press Enter to close window

The hillocks of Giltconfines has been founded a half day's travel to the northeast and
incorporated into your holdings.
Press Enter to close window

The hillocks of Skylanterns has been founded a day's travel to the northeast and
incorporated into your holdings.

The hillocks of Crystalgem has been founded nearly a day's travel to the north and
incorporated into your holdings.

The hillocks of Scaledcloisters has been founded nearly a day's travel to the northeast
and incorporated into your holdings.

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They were determined to aid their vertical empire of glass in its inevitable and crushing reach outwards across the land. Finally, the kingdom that had conquered hell extended its barbed roots outwards to bend the weakened claims of the surface into servitude of dwarven order. This new order of industry and design had similar motives to other conquerors, but it attacked with an efficacy that was previously unknown to the residents of the world. Battles and sieges that once took months and years now took days or merely hours.

The siege camps around Archcrystal recalled their armies, such as they were now, for the defense of their own threatened territories. Fear had gripped the world as the dwarven invaders blitzed across the central continent unchecked and undefeated.

These thoughts brightened Stinthad's descent down the glass tower into hell - a trip that was usually foreboding to newcomers. She could here a faint shouting as she walked down the stairs through the magma sea and past the heroes of old who lay in clear tombs of glass. The shouting became louder and more rhythmic the further she got to the entrance hall. Eventually they were herded to the main temple where the source of the shouting revealed itself.

"All migrants form a line!"

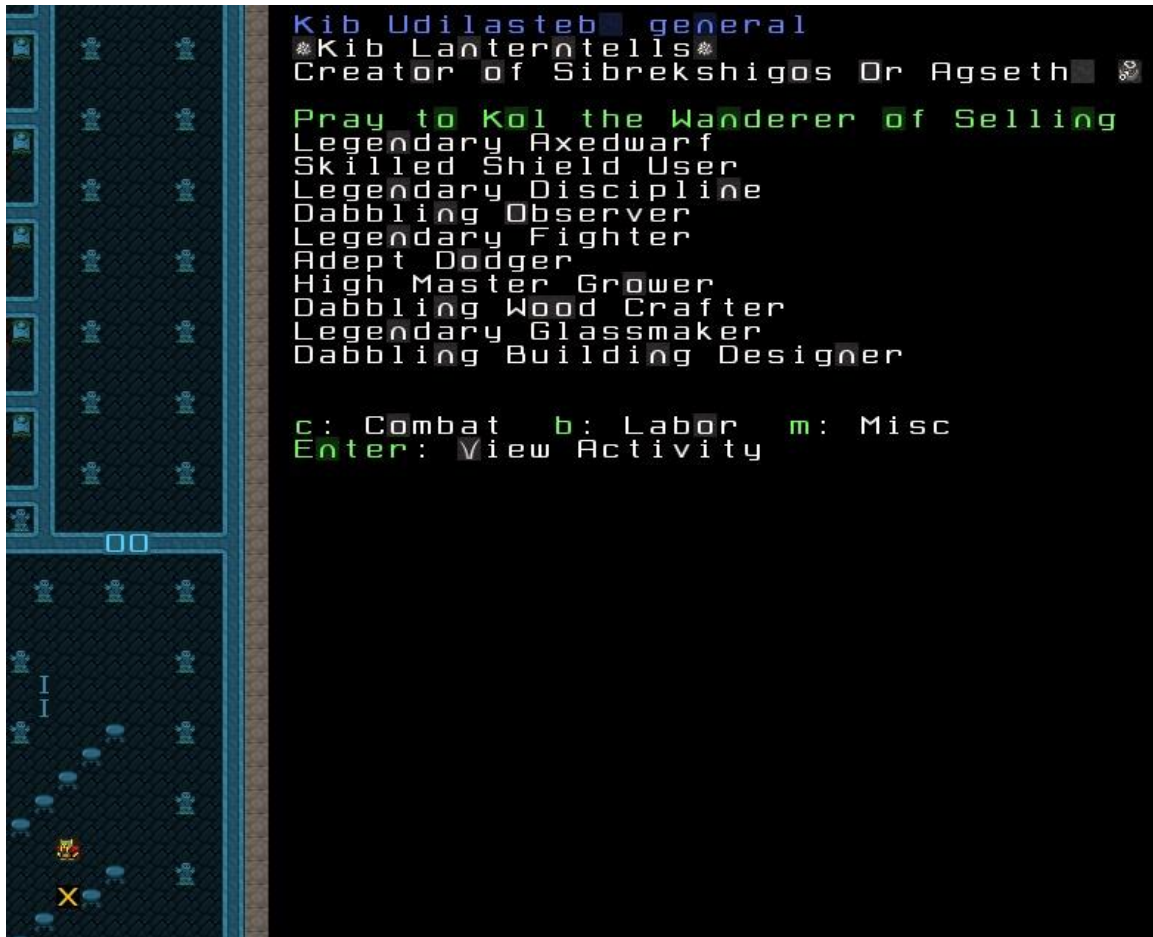
"Combat experience to the left!"

"All others to the right!"

"Children to the center!"

"You will be re-united with your children once they reach combat age!"

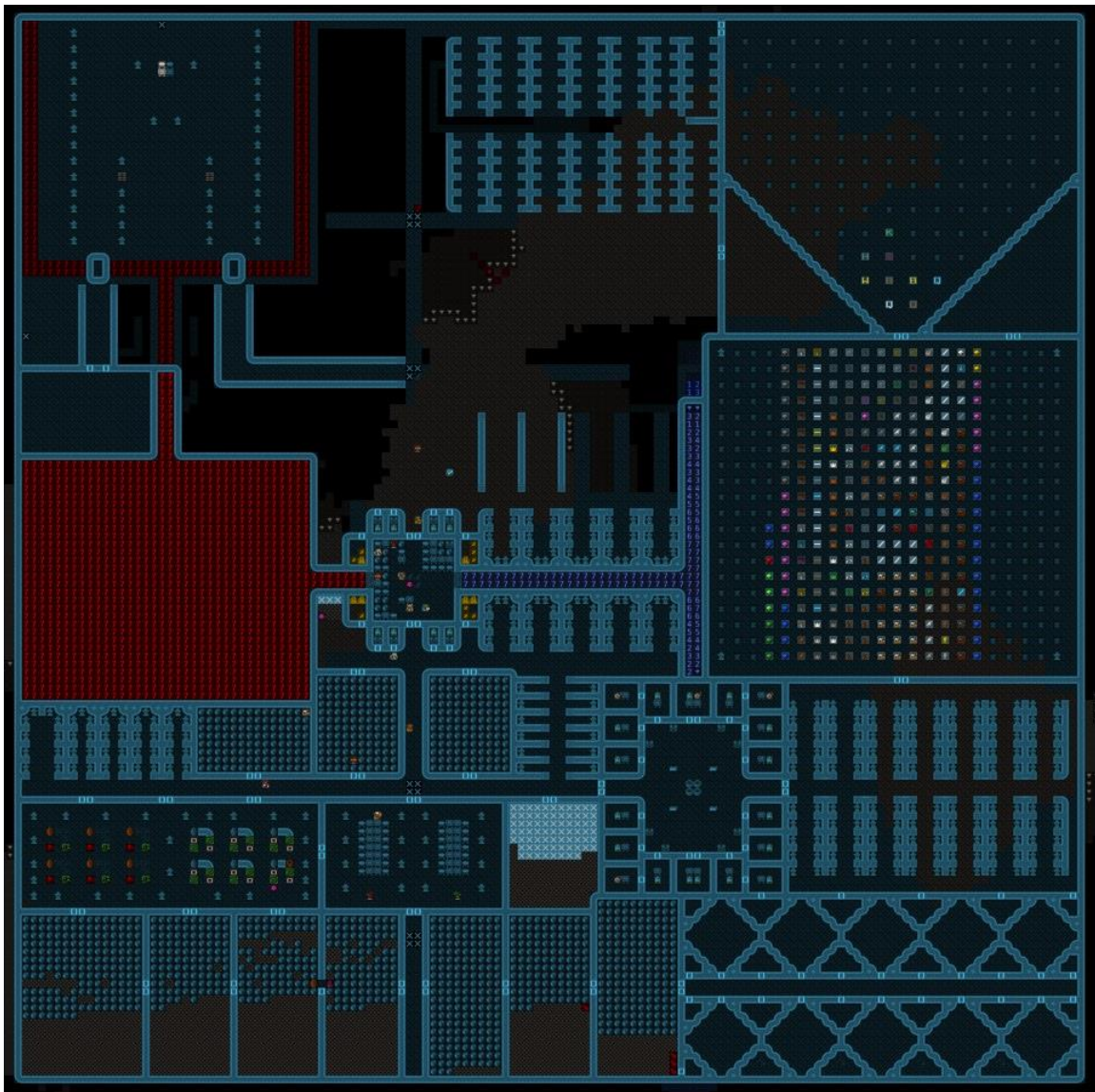
Kib the general barked his commands at the huddled mass of new comers.



The ones with fighting experience were given command of their squads as everyone was outfitted with armor and weapons.

Zefon had been busy forging new suits of steel armor non-stop for the last year since the migrants were taken in. They lacked the ornate decoration of the suits of old, but were still embedded with hydra bone and studded with copper to give a fierce look to them.

Weapons were easier to come by. The former king Ushrir Dikeguards has been a master weapon smith who loved spears and bismuth bronze. He had filled his own mandates for these weapons for decades over 150 years ago. Now they were given to the newcomers. Masterpieces, all of them that blazed with the decoration of countless materials. The newcomers who received them stared in awe at their new weapons which gave them a confidence created by the dwarves of Archcrystal down through the centuries. They also finally had a chance to gaze upon the constructions of the glass fortress in hell. The tower was completely floored and the second level was nearing completion.



Petty crimes were way down as well. The guard were no longer delivering beatings non-stop, and the spirits of the dwarves were soaring again. King Zan had successfully appeased the population at last, and the answer was so simple: war. They were united and driven by the promise of conquest and the idea that everyone outside was an enemy that every dwarf of Archcrystal shared. Why he had never thought about it before eluded him. But, on the outside, it looked like a master stroke of tactics. For hundreds of years armies of goblins had broken themselves in an attempt to take the tower, and now their forces were so depleted that they could not withstand the powerful dwarven offensive that was washing over their strongholds.

While the mood among the citizens of Archcrystal was focused and happy, the migrants were scared and separated. Children as young as two were being torn from the arms of their parents and placed into general care rooms. It also looked as bad as it felt: screaming toddlers were being forced from sobbing mothers, and many of the dwarves

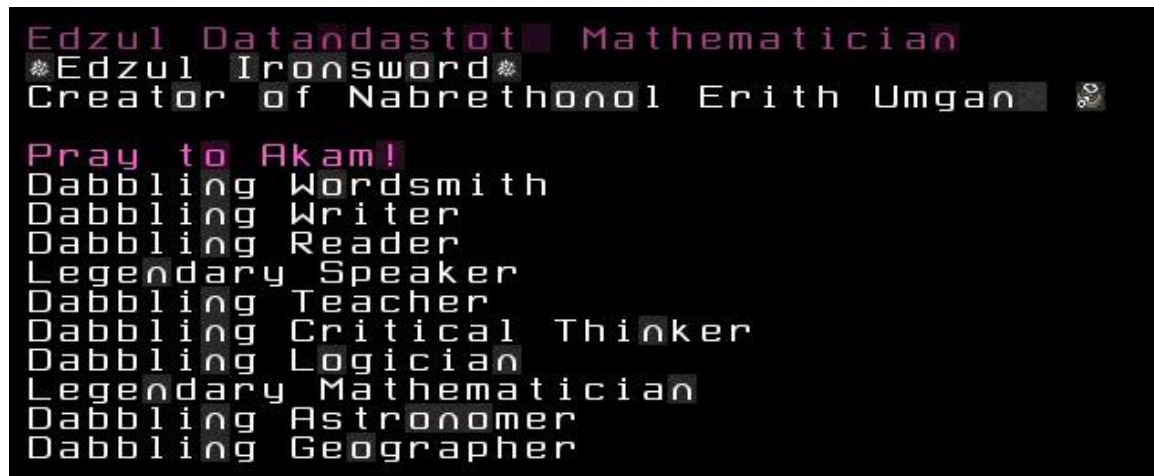
began to wonder out loud why this was needed. The children watched without comprehension as their parents were forcibly outfitted with weapons and armor and commanded to train far away from them. The scene was a horrific blend of efficiency and raw emotion. Infants had no understanding of the events and the parents had no way of giving them meaningful assurance. The many elaborate toys given to them were also of little distraction as they longed for their mothers.

King Zan consoled himself by thinking it was necessary, but many around him questioned his methods.

“They will realize eventually that it was for the greater good,” he would say.

Fath was one of the first to doubt this. He raised the question with his followers who would respond with downward looks and muted responses. He took it upon himself to confront the king and tell him their concerns. He watched closely as another squad of migrants marched out of the front gate resplendent in their shiny new armor. He could see the longing of the parents who looked back one last time to where their children were. He shook his head and retired to his library.

Edzul, the great mathematician of Archcrystal, visited Fath in the Heart-Amory of Oblivion. It was a regular occurrence, one that Fath looked forward to.



They would debate time and consequences for hours, and given Fath’s immortality, each discussion would take on new meaning. However, Edzul was a “once in a generation” mind capable of accurately comparing observations beyond the best scholars of the world.

“Those children will grow to hate us, Fath.”

“I agree with you, Edzul, but the king may be right. I have seen that time is infinite and therefore smoothes over our concerns. In a century they may see his views as correct.”

“Bullshit. Grudges are not forgotten so easily. Even infinite time is constricted by boundaries.”

“Ha! Infinite time would crush every vengeance. You of all people should know this. Given infinite time, everything becomes not only possible but assured. If the chance of you being reborn is 0.000001% then an infinite number of chances to create that makes it a certainty.”

“Time may have borders that we don’t know of, Fath.”

“What borders could exist with infinite time?”

Edzul sipped his plump helmet wine thoughtfully before answering, “You are using mathematics to justify your meaning. It doesn’t work like that, my friend. There are no absolutes even in mathematics. Infinite numbers do not equal infinite possibilities, as much as zero is not a void - zero must still exist for there to be nothing.”

Fath drank his own wine which did nothing for him as a necromancer. He suspected Edzul knew about his secret immortality, but said nothing except, “You still haven’t answered me,” he paused, “about infinity.”

“Think of it this way, Fath: if you take decimals, there are an infinite amount of numbers between 3 and 4”

Edzul paused before taking another sip, “But none of them are 5.”

10th of Timber Year 512
440th Year of Archcrystal
Heroes that Conquer

Stinthad crept up the rocky ridge out of the ravine with her squad. There was no point in trying to be quiet with the full suits of steel armour crashing about as they gained the crest of the trench that the goblins seemed so fond of. After 9 years of training her group of 10 migrants were deemed fit enough to attack the pits of Wardspider to the west. While her stay in Archcrystal was brief by dwarven standards, she was glad to leave the bureaucracy and decadence of the crystal spire. 440 years of isolation and inbreeding had made the City in Hell almost as unlivable to newcomers as the demons had centuries ago. The nobility invented crimes to lock them in the many dungeons of the glass fortress - disorderly conduct, vandalism, trading the wrong good, not making enough grates for a city that hundreds of unused ones collecting dust in the endless stockpiles. And it was almost always a migrant who "broke the law", the purebloods of the line of Bomrek and Cerol being far too important and wealthy to suffer the wrath of the injustice system that a brutal and bright eyed fanatical guard enforced with deadly fervor. And the worse part of it all, to Stinthad at least, was that there did not seem to be any retribution for their luxurious vices. In fact, they thrived under such a system. Their treasures uncounted, their armies unbeaten, and their souls untainted by the gods who honoured them with

lavish burials and a lack of divine sanction. When she was young she was taught in her refugee camp that the rich and elite of Archcrystal had earned their status and luxuries through difficult labour and sacrifice, and that their glorious gains of success would benefit all dwarves as the industrious rewards flowed down stream unto them, the helpless poor. But now, as she looked upon the wretched goblin pits that she was to attack and conquer, she realized there was no such river of affluence. It had been damned at the source.

Her squad stopped and formed a phalanx at the top of the trench about 300 feet from the gates of the goblin city. She could see the green-skinned recruits rushing from wall to wall, readying their weapons at the sight of the steel-clad dwarven invaders shining in the sunlight. Guttural orders from the parapets echoed across the lower plain before the gates, and arrows sang through the sky from behind the walls towards the dwarven formation. Stinthad and her squad barely bothered to put up their shields as the aim of the goblins was terrible even by their standards. Most of the copper tipped projectiles deflected off the dwarves like pebbles striking a tin pot, as the rest were swatted out of the air with spears and shields. The goblins eager to see the result of their assault were met with no screams, no call to action, not even laughter at their impotence, but a stone-faced and unmoving stance of the disciplined dwarves which was more terrifying than anything else. As the defenders gazed from the behind their walls, the steel square of death began to march forward slowly towards the gates and more arrows descended upon them with equal ineffectiveness. Uvash, the squad leader, knew the key to a successful raid was conserving the stamina of his soldiers, so there was no charge and no needless waste of energy as they steadily closed ground on the front gates. They reached the crude copper gates and with one concerted thrust of bodies the soft hinges cracked and the gates smashed to the ground in front of them as the goblins prepared their meager defense in the courtyard beyond. Lined up to face the dwarves were a collection of unskilled conscripts, scared and poorly equipped. Mixed among them were captured humans, elves, and even dwarves who had known no other life rather than servitude to their captors. At a command from their goblin commander they rushed the dwarves who stood firmly in their formation, spears outstretched and extended in perfect lines. The charge crashed into these horribly sharp weapons with screams and spurts of arterial blood. The limp bodies of the attackers at the front fell and slid down the shafts of many bismuth bronze spears lubricated along the way by blood and bile from internal organs before being tossed aside like unwanted food on priceless skewers. Stinthad advanced on a group of six defenders, whirling her spear from behind her back into a neck and another's forearm severing the tendons holding the weapon of the latter and almost decapitating the head of the former. Using her momentum she turned a full 360 avoiding the thrust of the silver short sword from her left, and then stabbed forward into the stomachs of two rushing attackers embedding her spear in them. She thought for a moment she should drop the weapon as she bludgeoned the teeth from her attacker to the left with her steel shield, before deciding to place her foot on the closest impaled chest and yanking brutally on the weapon so it came free. Pulling back it dislodged both victims complete digestive systems that were now wrapped around the shaft of the centuries old lancet and she pivoted to face the next attacker who was screaming a high pitched battle cry as they attacked the one who had massacred their comrades in a few seconds. Stinthad was

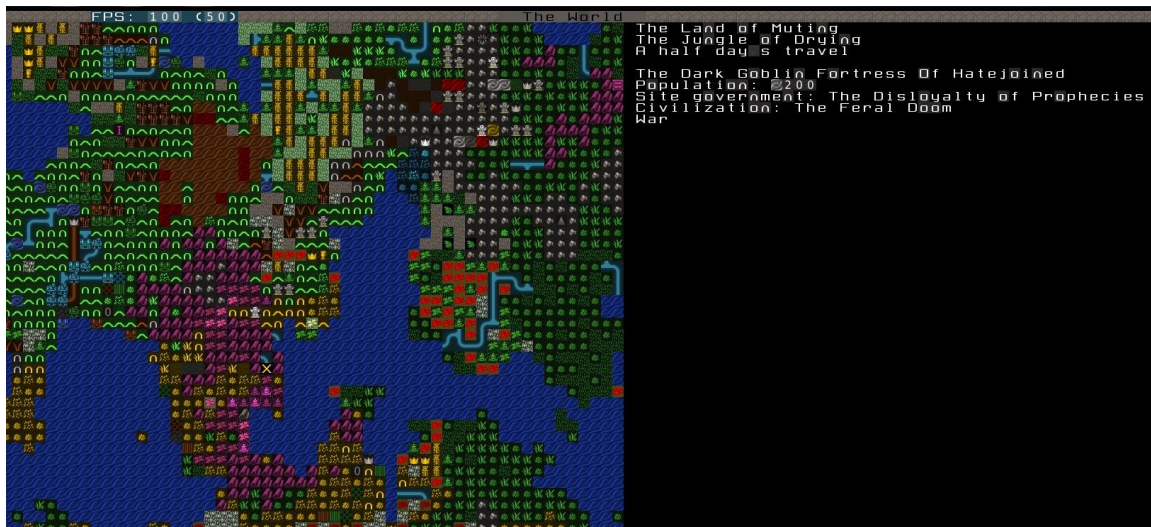
caught off guard for a moment as she realized it was a dwarf rushing at her with a well-made steel mace, striking in quick succession which made Stinthad parry the blows awkwardly with her long spear and shield. In the next exchange, Stinthad's attacker over-committed the next swing downward missing to her dodge, and Stinthad seized the advantage by bringing her spear in a downwards arc over her head which shot through her attacker's upper torso and pinning them upright into the ground. The body then slid in slow motion down the shaft of the spear towards the ground and it stopped with a dull thud. Stinthad pulled her spear tip out the ground and through the wound to retrieve her weapon, and as she did the crying began. What looked like a wine skin on the dead dwarf was actually an infant's sling, out of which now crawled a baby dwarf no more than 10 months old. It was not uncommon for dwarves to take their babies into battle with them, but this was the first time she had seen it in an enemy from the other perspective. The baby was screaming horribly, part in terror, part in pain as Stinthad could see that its left arm was broken and bent at an unnatural angle. With its right arm the infant reached out towards the wound in its mother's chest, seemingly trying to stop the blood from bubbling forth, while holding its mangled left arm towards the sky to shield itself from any further strikes. Stinthad stood still in shock. She had no idea what to do.

The sounds of the battle died down shortly afterwards, the defenders mostly killed, or fled. The other dwarves from her squad gathered around Stinthad who looked to Uvash with a vacant unknowing look. There was silence for a moment. Uvash then smirked, "Congratulations, Stinthad. It's a boy!"

The dwarves laughed heartily as they walked away from her. Stinthad picked up the infant and frowned. Maybe if she was male, she would have found that funny, but she still doubted it and she went off in search of something for the baby to eat, and send the standard message home about the raid.

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The pits of Wardspider, a half day's travel to the west, has been conquered and incorporated into your holdings.
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Meanwhile, about a day's travel to the south east Ezost Shasargedor Bibarbanik, the Demon of Hatejoined, slithered down one of his immense slade hallways.



He was a gigantic lizard, but moved quickly and gracefully without a sound. His darting eyes could see well in the blackness of the tunnels which he knew well from frequent travel. He had been worried for a number of years now, ever since the dwarves had begun their march across the planet, conquering new territory every month.



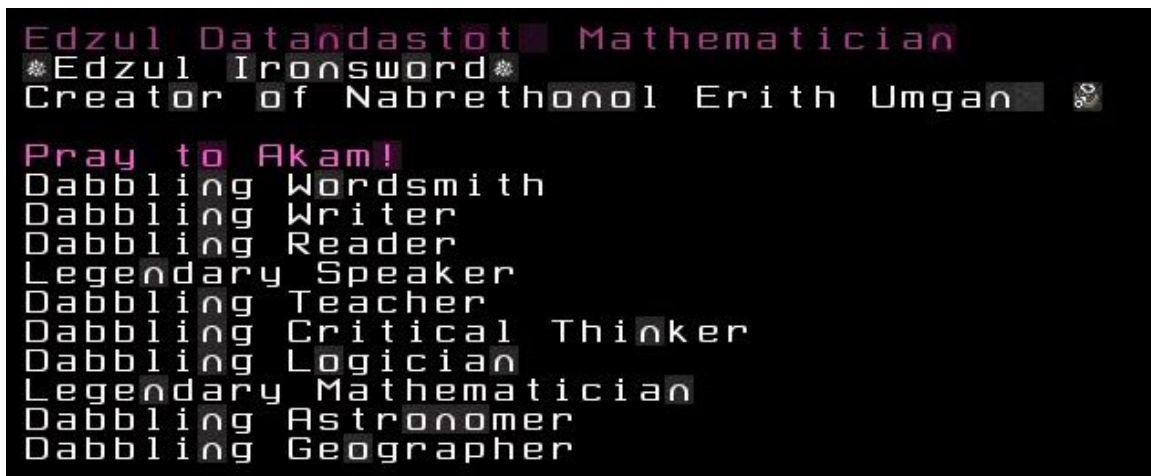
His goblin armies were shattered in the north, and his forces seem to give up quickly. He had recalled his forces from the south, to prepare a large attack on Archcrystal. His warriors weren't of the same caliber as the dwarves, but he concluded that overwhelming numbers would make the difference. It left his southern front against the elves of the Vine of Tornados dangerously unprotected, but the dwarves were the bigger threat by far. No armies had done what they had in so little time since the early days – and Ezost remembered those. Back then it had been easy for his goblins to raze a dwarven fortress or an elven forest retreat. He had led his armies personally all those years ago, until as the centuries past, he became satiated and over confident. He had laughed with his entourage

upon discovering that the dwarves of The Dipped Spears had set up an outpost in the evil jungle over 4 centuries ago. The others who laughed with him were all dead now. He cursed his laziness, as he descended down a large stairwell surrounded by a deep dark pit. Well no more, he thought. It was time for these mortals to witness true power.

At last Ezost stood before a great door of slade. He turned his ancient bronze key into the massive lock and the mechanisms rolled and strained as the door pulled itself open. The Eerie glowing pits beyond were warm, but their light was muted by the mass surrounding it. 10,000 demons swarmed and gathered around the entranceway to Hatejoined. Ezost allowed himself a scaly smirk, if the attack above was not enough, his attack from below surely would be.

28th of Obsidian Year 517
445th Year of Archcrystal
Pride and Numbers

Edzul Ironsword was about to die. The legendary mathematician of Archcrystal lay in the glass hospital within Hell and received the visits by his loved ones until there was no one present besides the doctors - and Fath.



Edzul was confused by his impending death. He didn't understand it. From a logical point of view he did not have to die. Whatever traits he could pass on to his children wouldn't be degraded if he continued to live. He still had contributions to make to his field of study. He tried to convince himself that the order of things demanded that everything renew itself, but he still couldn't reason past the flaws of having a mind such as his fail because of a body that can't keep up.

Was it pride? Was it his own stupidity compared with, as Fath would say, the immense design of things? As smart as he was compared to his time, the lasting question that haunted him was this:

Is his intelligence even worthwhile compared with what could be known? That question seemed juvenile to him yet he couldn't dispute its relevance.

It was staggering to him to think that in a century, other scholars would make discoveries far surpassing anything he could begin. And yet, it was inevitable. Edzul felt envy like he'd never felt before and he hated it. And worse, he hated the regret that all of this came with, a selfish pandering of his own perceived worth.

Fath sensed this as he kneeled gently beside his long time friends bedside.

Edzul's voice was raspy and slow as he spoke, much like the misshapen collection of words that came out of it.

"There's no destiny for you here... there's none for any of us. All of our ancestors will be forgotten as you will be - as I will be. All of my work will contribute to a dying project, one that is not destroyed by the infinite time which you prescribe to, but by the walls that contain it. Stupid, stupid, stupid pride! I've wished for it to listen to my reason, but it can't. It knows no such sentiment. Above all of this rambling, listen to me..."

Edzul coughed and sputtered until his lungs were wracked with pain. The doctors were already bringing over sheets to lay over his lifeless face when Fath waved them off and leant closely with his ear pressed towards Edzul's lips. Edzul whispered sharply,

"You won't become the singularity within the void, don't even try."

Fath looked downwards then up towards Edzul's glassy eyes, "What if I can?"

"You won't."

And Edzul, the great mathematician of his time, exhaled his last breath with those words and passed into a blueprint of life that was not his own - one that he saw as corrupt and unfair.

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FPS: 100 C503  marble memorial to Edzul Datandastot
This is a well-crafted marble memorial to Edzul Datandastot. It is encircled with bands of finely-crafted mussel shell. The slab reads, in memory of Edzul Datandastot / Born 347 / Died peacefully in the year 518 / Creator of Skirismountain the Throat of Ambiguity.
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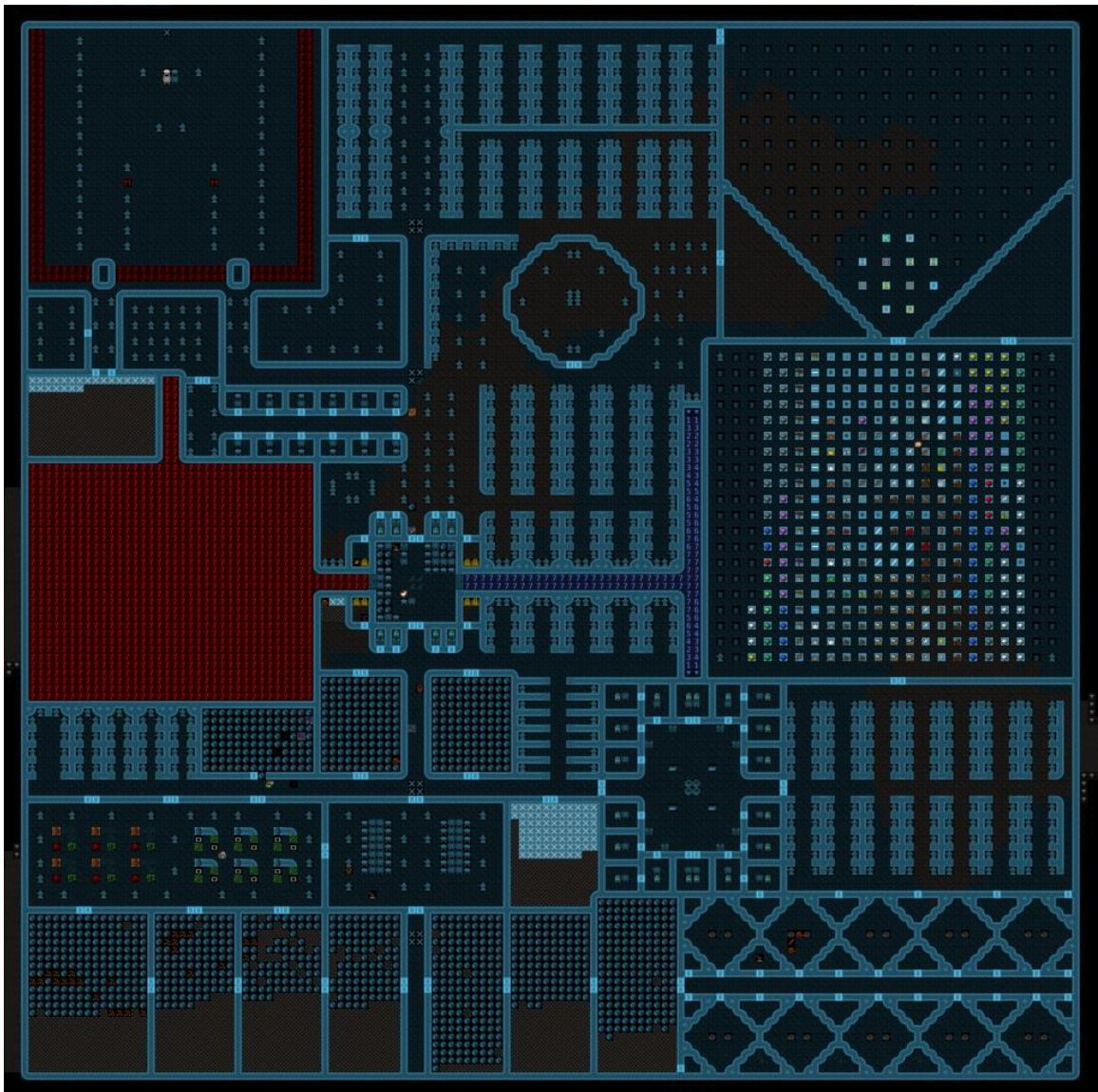
With all of the rage of an adolescent teen raging against adults, Edzul passed unceremoniously into death, still convinced of his importance despite a knowledge of its intellectual insignificance. In the end he couldn't help feeling that which he would have ridiculed in others for the same behavior. His last emotion ended up being one of regret.

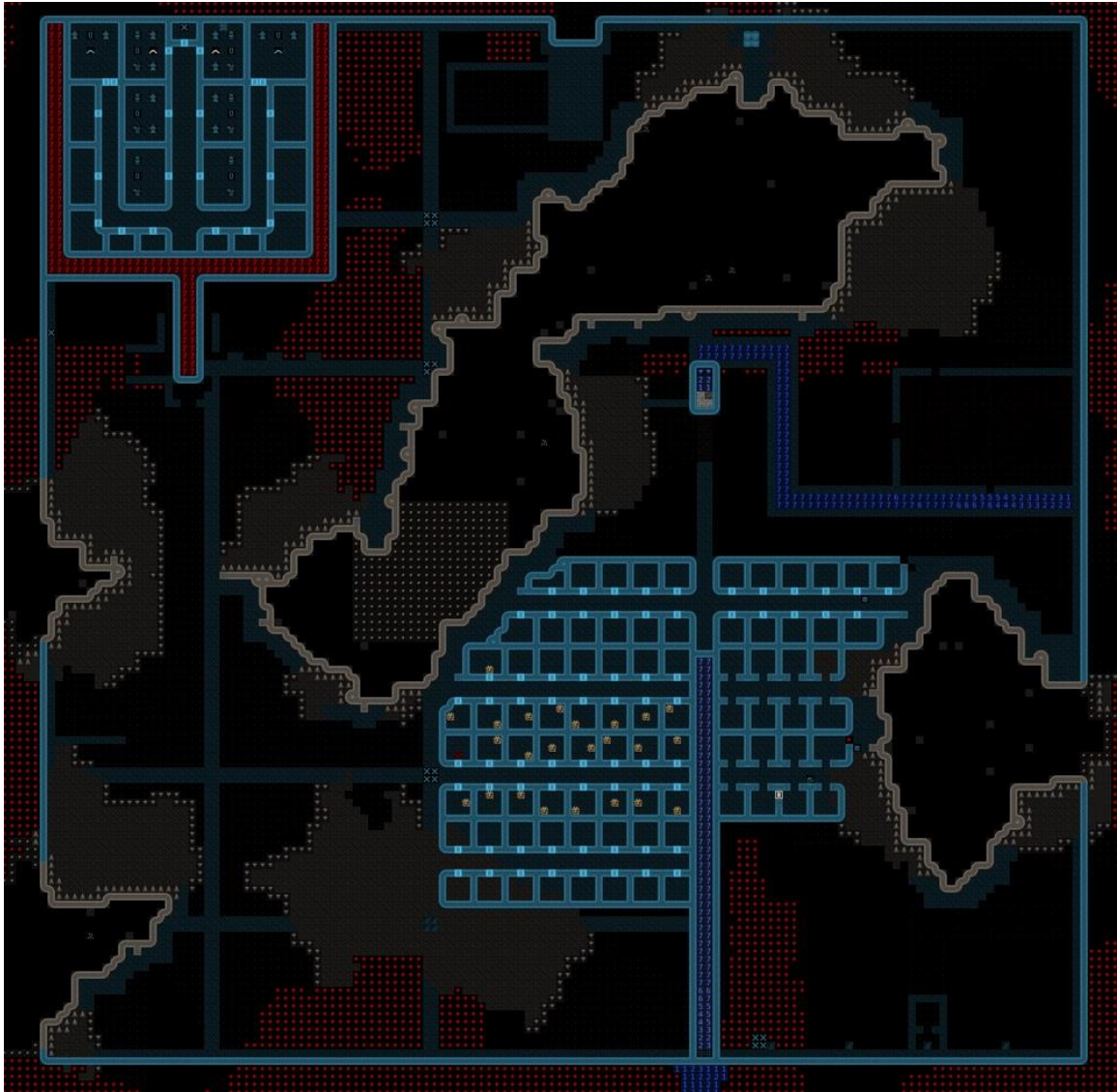
In a perfect world, these thoughts and desires would have died with him, and his legacy would have been simply of a great scientist whose mind had been disrupted by sickness and old age - if it were not for Fath who resonated with Edzul's final thoughts. His wisdom had mixed so much with his pride that it was difficult for anyone to separate the two. So Fath accepted these final moments as reason. Edzul was, after all, the last of Fath's childhood friends and easily the closest of these. Fath had a good memory, and a part of him that was still mortal longed for the days when life between them was a series

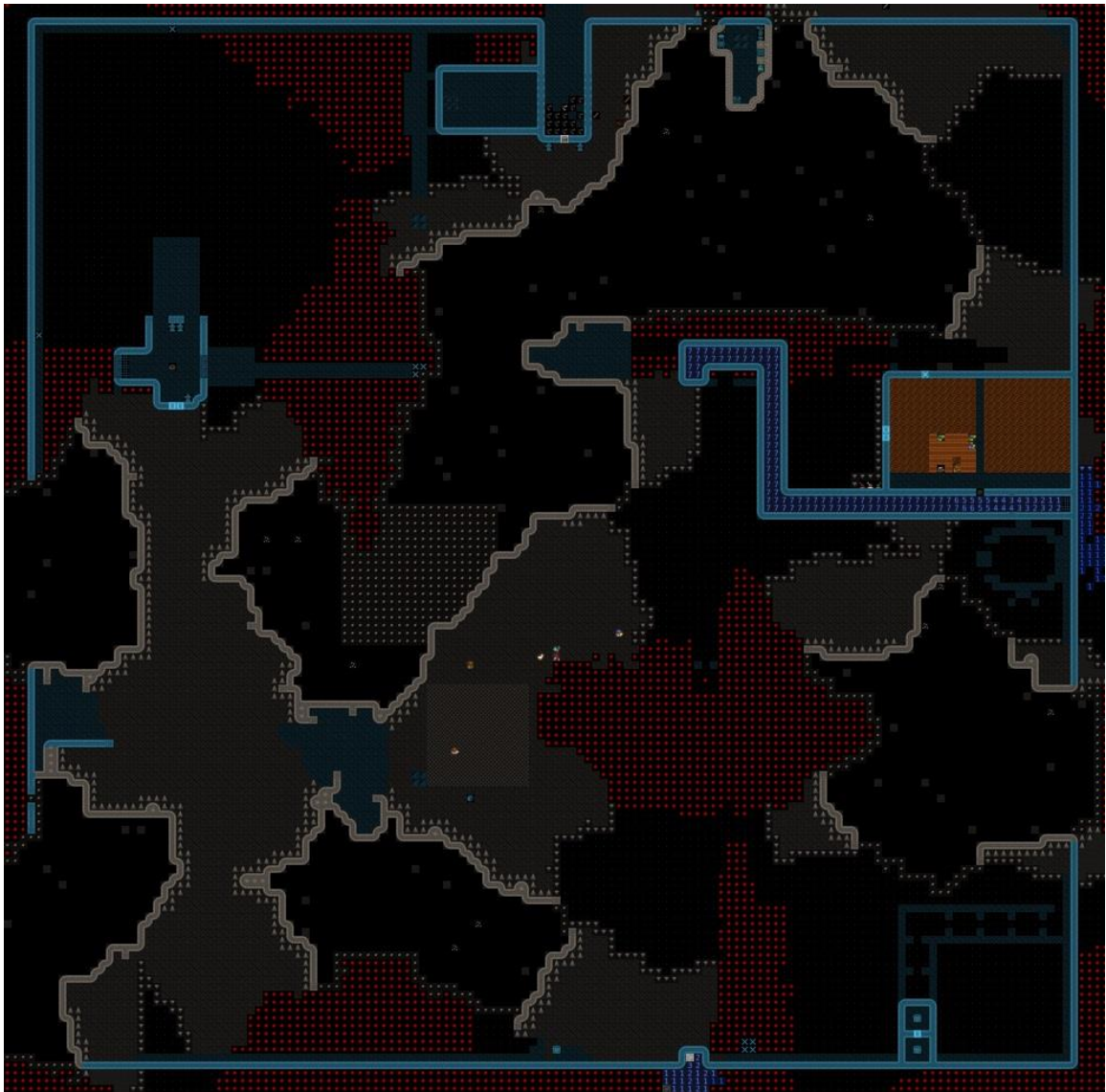
of toys and games. The toys were weapons now, and the games were deadly. Both held the desires of a person that can't be reached anymore.

The fortress of Archcrystal continued to expand in hell down from its entrance, less like a virus now and more like a dead animal bleeding out glass walls and floors from a hook downwards to the ground.











It spread continuously and relentlessly with a steadied pace that began to worry the demons until there appeared something never before seen in their history, such as it was.

Great columns of them flowed across the pits and plains of slade. Their numbers were seemingly infinite and small skirmishes broke out with the ones that had organized and the ones that hadn't - the ones that hadn't didn't last long. It was a force that stood at the gates of the dwarven invaders that had never been formed before. It was controlled and steady like the rhythm of an ancient and forgotten heart that had compensated for an atrophied exercise. They surrounded the bottom of Archcrystal completely and stared through the glass structure before them. It was a malevolent gaze tinged with awe, but focused against the scurrying creators inside.

Erith the captain of the guard looked upon the mass assembled outside and ordered his guard to take position behind their fortifications.



The demons were shredded with bolts until no more advanced and the majority of the horde stood beyond their reach, waiting and planning. For a while no one moved besides the flutter of a wing or the aim adjustment of a crossbow. Then the invading horde rushed the artifact door. The collective force shook the foundations of the fortress as the indestructible door remained unblemished, but the connective architecture that held it to the glass walls strained audibly under the sheer force of a functionally infinite number of attackers. The sounds of the glass under so much pressure echoed through hell like massive glacier beginning to crack far below its surface.

More wickedly barbed projectiles tore through the immense bodies crashing the entrance.

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The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the cephalothorax
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the left second
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the right wing
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the abdomen
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the left first
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the right fourth
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the left third
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the right first
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the right second
leg and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the left fourth
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the left third leg
and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the right fourth
leg and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the right first
leg and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The winged fiend falls over
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the winged fiend in the abdomen and
the severed part sails off in an arc!
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The flying {copper bolt} strikes the demon of water in the upper body
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the demon of water in the upper body
breaking away the rest of the tissue!
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The flying {copper bolt} strikes the gray monster in the shell
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the gray monster in the right rear
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {-copper bolt-} strikes the gray monster in the shell and the
severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the gray monster in the left front
foot breaking away half of the tissue!
The force pulls the left front leg and the severed part sails off in an
arc!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the gray monster in the right rear leg
and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The gray monster falls over
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the gray monster in the right front
leg and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {-copper bolt-} strikes the gray monster in the left rear leg
and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the gray monster in the lower body
and the severed part sails off in an arc!

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The loam devil jumps away from The flying {-copper bolt-}!
The flying {bronze bolt} strikes the loam devil in the right rear
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {-copper bolt-} strikes the loam devil in the left front leg
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the loam devil in the lower body
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {bronze bolt} strikes the loam devil in the right front
leg breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {-copper bolt-} strikes the loam devil in the upper body
breaking away half of the tissue!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the loam devil in the right rear
leg and the severed part sails off in an arc!
The flying {bronze bolt} strikes the loam devil in the upper body
breaking away the rest of the tissue!

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The flying {silver bolt} misses the viper devil!
The viper devil jumps away from The flying {copper bolt}!
The viper devil stands up
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle!
The viper devil falls over
Viper Devil: I've been injured badly. There is no hope!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle and bruising the heart!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the neck tearing
the muscle and fracturing the upper spine's bone!
A tendon in the upper spine has been torn!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the head tearing
the muscle fracturing the skull!
A tendon in the skull has been torn!
The force bends the neck!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle and bruising the right lung!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle fracturing the right true ribs!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle and bruising the guts!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the head tearing
the muscle and fracturing the skull!
A tendon in the skull has been torn!
The force bends the neck!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the neck tearing
the muscle and fracturing the upper spine's bone!
A tendon in the upper spine has been torn!
The flying {bismuth bronze bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body
tearing the muscle and fracturing the left false ribs!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the shell
fracturing it!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle and fracturing the right true ribs!
The flying {bismuth bronze bolt} strikes the viper devil in the tail
chipping the bone!
A tendon has been torn!
The flying {silver bolt} strikes the viper devil in the body tearing
the muscle and bruising the guts!
The flying {copper bolt} strikes the viper devil in the head tearing
the muscle and fracturing the skull!
A tendon in the skull has been torn!
The force bends the neck!

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The sheer mass of tissue, bone and muscle created an effective barrier no matter what material it was composed of, and glass makers and masons quickly reinforced its support on the other side. It was a war of manufactured attrition now, as both sides set against each other working to undo the other's efforts. After several hours it was clear that there

would be no clear winner and the demons again receded to their ranks beyond the eerie glowing pits, but they stood in rank unlike anything the dwarves had ever seen. They waited with narrowed eyes wondering what the demons were thinking when suddenly the glass walls shook like an earthquake. Projectiles of all kinds smashed against the entrance - acid, poison, fire, webbing, poisonous acidic webs on fire. There was no end to the constant barrage of organic bullets that pelted the fortress. If it was one thing that the demons had learned from the dwarves of Archcrystal it was patience. Persistent attack would eventually sap the walls through consistency of effort. Such was the advantage of their immortality. They were committed by their knowledge of dwarven life spans and were content to wear away the defenders before them without relent like a river carving its way through a canyon of shaped glass. In a way the dwarves had made them more dangerous in that they now understood the value of concentrated effort over time and a realization that nothing was able to withstand the strategy and determination of those that are endless in both life and will.

The dwarves were doomed - had it not been for one who recently came to understand the concept of an existence where forever held a reality. Fath's detriments became his strengths as his esoteric arguments over infinite time became the backbone of the defender's resolve.

As he stood at the gates into hell looking through the walls of Archcrystal he was about to attempt something, that he swore he would never do.